

## Found online: Ideas for Themed Culture Weeks

### Language: The Power of Babel!

**Teaching point:** *Language diversity is the norm - most people in the world speak more than one language. Language is dynamic.*

- Conduct a survey of the languages spoken by those in school, parents, wider family, friends, community
- Collect examples of other languages in the environment e.g. shop signs, packaging, inscriptions on buildings and gravestones, public information leaflets, newspapers
- Learn to say hello in a variety of languages - answer the register in various languages
- Label things in the classroom in various languages - use [www.word2word.com](http://www.word2word.com)
- Learn to write names in other scripts - use local contacts e.g. other schools, restaurants, colleges, secondary schools, parents etc.
- Examine the history of English as a hybrid language - use etymological dictionaries, origins of figures of speech (e.g. sacred cow, nitty-gritty) Play The Word House Game.
- Build a language map of the world - look at how it reflects historical and political relationships
- Look at varieties of English - local dialects, American/Australian English, pidgin etc.
- Look at the languages of modern Britain, including signing and Braille
- Look at the benefits of bilingualism in employment - interview local employers, national employers, parents' work experiences etc.
- Employ a bilingual storyteller, or get local people in to tell a story bilingually.
- Link with another school, locally or globally, and explore language diversity

#### The week itself could include:

- Multilingual presentations - stories, poems, songs, drama
- Multilingual displays - scripts, figures of speech/proverbs, language maps of the world and of Britain, relationships between languages, types of English
- Powerpoint presentations, video/radio documentaries
- Language classes - pupils teaching each other/ parents/visitors
- Use a link with another school, create a powerpoint presentation/wall display/video about language diversity

### On the Move!

**Teaching point:** *Population movement is normal and happens for a variety of reasons.*

- Explore population movement in the local area. Through questionnaires and surveys find out: Who has moved in? When? Why? Where from? Who do we know who has moved out? Where to? Why? Include staff in this.
- Trace family migration over several generations of parents grandparents. Even families who have been local for generations will have relatives who have moved away.
- Obtain a directory for your local area from the library or archives for 50 years ago, 100 years ago, and a copy of the electoral register. Compare names and occupations etc.
- Consider why people move - forced and economic migration, personal reasons, traveller lifestyle etc. What do they gain? What do they lose?
- Where do people actually belong? Why? Can it change? Who decides where a person belongs?
- Where do people travel to on holiday? Why?
- Share information about movement patterns with a link school in a very different area.
- Explore famous people who have been migrants to America, and vice versa e.g. the founders of Marks and Spencer. What about footballers? Are they migrants or exports?)
- Consider the situation of refugees and asylum seekers. What are their stories? How are they

represented in the press? Consider a situation where people of Britain became refugees e.g. through severe climate change. How would we feel? Where would we go? How would we like to be treated?

- Consider the experiences of other groups of people forced to move - Africans who were sold into slavery, prisoners transported to Australia, Irish people escaping the potato famine etc.
- Look at the ways people have expressed their feelings about migration - through music, art, literature.
- Consider the effects of population movement - the spread of ideas, trade, the growth of languages etc.
- Make comparisons with animal migration.
- Explore stories about migration and movement - Bible stories, refugee stories, Little House on the Prairie, Odysseus, The Hobbit etc.

#### **The week itself could include:**

- A map of the world and of Britain that shows where people have connections-this could be done as an interactive map if you have the IT skills
- A display of people's stories (including those who have never moved) which can be in the form of a book, a video documentary, a drama, a powerpoint presentation, a wall display
- The creation of a game - a board game or a simulation game - that shows population movement
- Invite speakers into school to talk about their immigration experiences
- Buy in a storyteller to tell stories about people on the move
- Share stories and research with another school and feature this during the week.
- A display that shows how population movement affects everyone in their everyday life - e.g. communicating with family across the UK and the world, being able to eat Indian/Chinese/etc food in Cumbria and buy fish and chips in Spain.

## **The World in our Kitchen!**

**Teaching points:** *The British diet is ever-changing and is influenced by many cultures. Food is a global commodity. There is an unequal distribution of food in the world.*

- What is typically English food? Is there any such thing?
- Changes over time e.g. food eaten by Romans, Tudors, Victorians etc. Where have the changes come from?
- What is English food now? Survey what people eat over a week, notice the diversity of diets within a class as well as the similarities, look at where our food comes from.
- Regional food – Kendal Mint cake, Yorkshire pudding, Lancashire hotpot, Chorley cakes
- If you have a link with another school either locally or globally, make comparisons with them about the most popular foods in the class/school, about food available in the shops, and about food for special occasions (e.g. the Christmas turkey, biryani at Eid etc. Does everyone eat the same? What if you don't like turkey?)
- If we have all this diversity here, what does that tell us about our generalisations of food in other countries?
- Recipes that originate in other cultures/use food grown in other parts of the world - look through a modern recipe book or use a TV cookery programme.
- Food and beliefs - Halal, Kosher, Vegetarian, Weight watchers etc.
- There is no shortage of food in the world and if all the food were divided equally, everyone would have enough to eat. However, 60% of people are always hungry and 26% of these are severely undernourished; 16% of people go hungry some of the time. Only 24% of people always have enough to eat. Do some research (e.g. contact Oxfam, local Global Education centres, search the internet) to find out why this is the case. Who is to blame? What can be done to help?
- Research the arguments around GM food and Fair Trade - hold a debate.

Other topics that can be dealt with in this way - clothes, homes, toys, games etc. The key is to view things from a global perspective, avoid stereotypical assumptions, recognise the interdependence of countries and communities, and explore issues of injustice.

## Telling how it is!

**Teaching points:** *Everyone tells stories, and for similar reasons. The people and things in stories may differ according to the local environment, the time and the culture, but often the core messages of stories are the same the world over.*

- Explore the different ways stories are told-orally, through books, films, TV, computer games, newspapers, magazines, radio, songs, music, dance, plays, opera, jokes, photos, art etc.
- Explore different reasons for telling stories - to inform, educate, entertain, frighten, stimulate different emotions, comfort, explain, avoid punishment, explore feelings and possibilities etc.
- Look at different types of stories and who shares them - e.g. fairy stories are shared by the world and retold in many different ways, including Disney; literature is accessible only to those who can read it, local stories are passed around amongst the members of a community; family stories are known and shared by the members of that family.
- Get people to tell stories - pupils, teachers, parents, members of the community.
- Buy in professional storytellers, artists, musicians, dancers etc to tell stories.
- Share stories with another school - local or global.
- Look at newspaper stories - interview a reporter - and consider what is included in a story, what is left out, whose story it is, could it be told differently etc.
- Tell the story of your school/religious building/family/community etc.

## Explore the World!

- Divide pupils into groups to study different countries. Include England (or Britain) as one of the countries to be considered. It is also useful to include the USA as children's knowledge about it is usually based on Disneyland and Hollywood where they are presented with a WASP perspective.
- Look at different ways each country is presented:
- The Encyclopaedia view - facts and figures, maps, major cities, well known events and people, languages, religion, climate etc
- The tourist view which sells the good points, tourist sites, amenities. Use information from tourist brochures and embassies. What image is the country trying to present of itself?
- Getting behind the images. Examine stereotypes, research diversity of population -cultural, religious, linguistic, urban, rural etc. - relationship with Britain and the rest of the world (or if studying Britain, relationships between countries of Britain, or with another country eg the US), good points, problems, bad points e.g. poverty, disease, racism etc. Contact tourist boards, schools, embassies, aid organisations etc via the internet.
- Famous people, including those who have stood out against injustice.
- Food (same and different)
- Sports - football teams, national sports, Olympic achievements etc
- Music - old and new
- Artwork
- Aspects of the lives of children
- At the end of the research, each group could prepare a presentation using the following:
  - Display boards and/or table
  - Powerpoint presentation
  - Video or book
  - Cook a recipe that originated in their country
  - Perform a song or a poem
  - Perform a play based on an issue relevant to that country
  - Design a web page

Also, you could use the week to stage some kind of international activity with older pupils e.g.

- Earth Summit on a world wide issue e.g. reduction of greenhouse gases

- Deciding who should host the next Olympic Games
- Play the Trading Game

## **Contacts:**

### **Wendy Ridley**

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### **Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC)**

St Martin's College

Low Nook, Ambleside, Cumbria. LA22 9BB

Tel: 015394 30231

Email: [CDEC@ucsm.ac.uk](mailto:CDEC@ucsm.ac.uk)

CDEC has project workers and bases in Barrow, Carlisle & Eden and the West coast. CDEC can help with providing ideas and resources, and with doing preparatory work with pupils on challenging perceptions of developing countries.

### **Carlisle Diocesan Resources Centre**

Diocesan Church Centre, West Walls

**Carlisle**, Cumbria CA 3 8UE

Tel: 01228 538086 or Fax: 01228 598220

Open: Mon.-Fri. 10:00-16:45 Sat: 10:00-12:30 (term time)

The Resource Centre has an extensive collection of resources. Boxes of artefacts, books, videos etc. from a range of faiths can be borrowed by schools. There are also books, cards etc. for sale. Christian Aid projects are also stocked.

## Running an Earth Summit on Fair Trade

This was done as an activity during a multicultural week planned by a cluster of small schools. The children in Y5 and Y6 had worked in small groups to research countries and prepare a display or presentation. The countries chosen for the Y6 pupils were those involved in the cocoa trade, either as producers or consumers.

On the day of the Summit, the Y6 pupils descended on one school, a total of about 80 children altogether. The pupils brought 5 things with them - either real things or on a list - to do a short presentation to the other pupils on the country they had researched.

The Summit focused on the issue of Fair Trade through the cocoa trade. A worker from Global Link Development Education Centre in Lancaster led the day, supported by the teachers from all the schools plus various parent helpers.

### Introduction to the chocolate trade

The 'Journey of Chocolate' activity - two large groups using two sets of photos that show the process involved in making a bar of chocolate. Dividing up a large chocolate bar showed how much of the price of the bar went to each of the people involved in making it.

### The Chocolate Trade game

In this game, pupils take on the following roles.

ordinary producers	fair trade producers
multinational chocolate company	fair trade chocolate company
supermarket	consumers
the media.	

They have to engage in the production and marketing of chocolate, buying and selling from each other, and responding to the vagaries of the weather and a market economy.

### UN Summit on Fair Trade

A motion was proposed to the group: 'All chocolate should be fairly traded by the year 2010.'

Three children were selected to be in the Media Group.

The pupils representing each country then went off with a teacher into a separate space, the role of the teacher was to facilitate and ensure time-keeping, not to guide their thinking. Within each country group, pupils were given role cards (see below) with a sentence or two explaining their vested interest. Each sub-group had to devise a 1 minute presentation to deliver to their government, trying to influence their vote. The government then had to make a decision and explain to their populace why they had chosen to vote that way.

Producing countries	Consuming countries
Government	Government
Producers	Multinational chocolate company
Fair Trade Producers	Fair Trade chocolate company
Labourer	Supermarket
Exporters	Processing factory

While this was happening, the Media Group went round to each group and prepared news bulletins for display on news board, having decided beforehand what their editorial bias was to be.

### The Vote

The pupils all reassembled in the hall. The governments sat at the front tables which had been set out with their flags and artefacts.

The most powerful countries were given three votes, everyone else had two. The motion was then put to the Summit and the votes were counted. The Media quickly published their final report on the result.

### Finishing Off

The Global Link worker debriefed the pupils on what had happened and the implications of their vote. The children stepped out of role and were given a chance to vote as themselves, and the GL worker

talked to them about how they could support Fair Trade. They each made a personal commitment and wrote it on a paper leaf to stick onto the Hope Tree.

The children evaluated the experience by each recording on a strip of paper what s/he felt had learnt that day. Some wrote: One thing I learnt today was:

"It isn't fair that richer countries get more power than poorer ones." .

"Everyone should have a shared amount of money" ..

"Newspapers don't always tell the truth" . .

"Fair Trade gives everyone a fair wage to survive."

## **An Islamic Culture Week:**

This project took place at St Michael's Nursery and Infant School in Workington. As part of curriculum enrichment, staff agreed on a 'collapsed curriculum' and organise three multicultural focus weeks per year. It was decided that the first of these would be on Islamic Culture and would take place during Ramadan.

The Headteacher arranged for an Islamic artist and educational consultant (Razwan Ul-Haq Tel: 0777 3963 502) to come from Burnley to lead a day of INSET for all staff, including the secretary (who thoroughly enjoyed the day). Razwan helped the staff plan the Islamic Culture Week. They examined aspects of Muslim life, beliefs and culture which could be adapted for young children and had practical sessions on Islamic music (chanting and call to prayer), calligraphy, painting and pattern making. Together staff planned activities in all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and in all curriculum areas in KS1.

The Islamic Culture week was launched by teachers showing their classes pictures of children from a range of cultural backgrounds. They discussed 'What's the same about these children and you?' then 'What's different about these children and you?'

Members of the very small local Muslim community were involved in the planning and were invited to visit the school during the week. They spoke to the children about their experiences as Muslims and dressed staff up in cultural appropriate clothes. A 6<sup>th</sup> form pupil from the local secondary school came and taught Bollywood dancing to each class. She showed traditional clothes and explained aspects of her life as a Muslim, such as the difficulties involved in fasting during Ramadan and the joys of Eid parties and of Henna hand painting.

The importance of the way progression for the different age ranges was handled is illustrated by the work done on the prayer mat. Each class was shown a prayer mat and told how and why Muslims use them. The mats were closely examined and touched by the children. In Nursery and Reception the children experimented with paint to design their own prayer mats. In Yr 1 they decorated fabric with a range of media to design their own prayer mats. In Yr 2 they wove paper strips to make a colourful prayer mat.

During the week all children participated in a range of activities in all curriculum areas, many of them based on shape. They were:

### **RE/Multi-cultural awareness:**

- Investigate poster pack pictures illustrating aspects of Muslim life (All-differentiated)
- Briefly introduce aspects of the daily life of a Muslim (All-differentiated)
- Investigate and explain Muslim artefacts (All-differentiated)
- Use a Persona Doll with the background of being a Muslim visiting Workington from Manchester. Introduce a range of things to celebrate and challenges to be overcome
- Investigate the catalogue Mrs Ali uses to order saris etc. (All-differentiated)
- Make and eat culturally appropriate food for snack time: Monday -sweet rice; Tuesday –Naan bread and poppadoms with curry dip; Wednesday-carrots and raisins; Thursday-saffron rice with savoury sauce; Friday-curry flavoured twisters (Reception)
- Learn the importance of prayer and of washing beforehand (Nursery and Reception)
- Role play activities in a Muslim mosque and home which involve sequencing (Nursery and Reception)
- Reflect on the joys and difficulties of fasting (Yr 1)
- Make food for an Eid Party e.g. pomegranate and rose water salad; carrot, sultana and cinnamon salad; Eid biscuits (Yr 1)
- Celebrate an Eid party (Yr 1)
- Discuss some of the 5 pillars of Islam (Yr 1 and 2)
- Debate the importance of the Qu'ran (Yr 2)
- Explore similarities between the mosque and other places of worship (Yr 2)
- Design a poster which shows what Muhammad (PBUH) taught about the natural world (Yr 2)

### **Numeracy:**

- Recognise basic shapes and how to fit them together to make geometric patterns (Nursery )
- Sort, match and count basic shapes (Nursery)
- Make tissue pattern shapes of Seal of Solomon (Nursery )
- Mix salt dough and cut out squares to form a Solomon seal (Nursery)
- Make repeated patterns form potato prints of Solomon Seals prints (Reception)
- Make mosques from building shapes (Reception)
- Design Islamic tile patterns on star shaped paper (Reception)
- Sing '10 green Bottles' and 'Five Little Frogs' using Punjabi numbers (Yr 1)
- Join up the Punjabi numbers to draw Punjabi numbers (Yr 1)
- Make prayer beads replicating a set pattern of colours (Yr 1)
- Make Seal of Solomon repeated pattern collage (Yr 1)
- Use one shape to make a Seal of Solomon (Yr 2)
- Mathematical investigation based on the Seal of Solomon (6 pointed star) (Yr 2)
- Count to 10 using Punjabi numbers (Yr 2)
- Join up the Punjabi numbers to make a shape (Yr 2)

### **Literacy:**

- Dress up in culturally appropriate clothes and role play Muslim family life encouraging appropriate speaking and listening (Nursery and Reception)
- Practice handwriting skills using Arabic letters and symbols (Reception)
- Write Allah in Arabic calligraphy on paper cut into the shape of a feather (Yr 1)
- Use The Tiny Ants and Seven New Kittens, by Gill Vaisey which are two traditional Muslim stories to encourage children to reflect on the need to care for the natural world. Design posters to advertise The Tiny Ants. Make a collage of kittens. (Yr 1)
- Write group acrostic poems based on 'Allah' and 'Muslim'
- Research Muslim culture through books, internet, interviewing Muslims (Yr 2)
- Listen to and discuss a range of Muslim stories – for example some from <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Fields/4963/index.html> (All - differentiated)

### **Art and Technology:**

- Set up the sand tray as a small world play of a Desert as in some Islamic countries there are deserts (Nursery)
- Set up the water tray as a small world play of an oasis as in some Islamic countries there are oasis (Nursery)
- Using large construction blocks fit different shapes together to make a mosque (Nursery)
- Make patterns by potato printing the word 'Allah' (Nursery and Reception)
- Trace round hands and design patterns on them like Henna hand painting (Reception)
- Make Papier Mache Eggs like those from Rajasthan (Yr 1)
- Design a mosque with a minaret (Yr 1)
- Design mosques using rolled paper for the 2 pillars. (Yr 2)
- Make a collage to portray a mosque (Yr 2)
- Design borders for the Exhibition displays using Islamic patterns (Yr 2)
- Introduce Islamic Art –calligraphy and patterns (All - differentiated)
- Make Eid cards, with some opening left to right (All - differentiated)

### **Music:**

- Introduce Indian Ragas and Islamic music from different parts of the world including fusion music and Bollywood music. (All - differentiated)
- Play instruments in time to Islamic music.
- Listen to and discuss culturally appropriate music and tried to replicate it using a range of musical instruments. (Yr 1 and 2)

### **PE/Dance:**



- All year groups experience Bollywood dancing; simpler moves for Reception and Yr1 while Yr 2 learn many more moves. This involves counting, concentration, awareness of body parts, and left and right orientation in order to keep to the rhythm.

# A Traveller Culture Week

## The aims were for:

- all classes to have the opportunity to consider and explore an aspect of Gypsy and Traveller culture and/or lifestyle
- all staff to have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with appropriate curriculum materials to support on-going work

## The intended outcomes were that:

- pupils would develop a more positive attitude towards Gypsies and Travellers
- staff would consider how to include a Gypsy and Traveller perspective in the curriculum
- a display would be made of the work carried out throughout the school and the art work entered for the Arts Competition

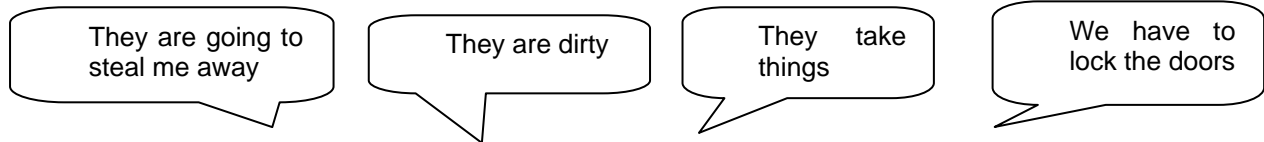
## The criteria for success would be that

- pupils showed positive attitudes towards Gypsies and Travellers in discussion
- pupils showed some knowledge and understanding of their lifestyle and culture
- staff felt they could use the resources in future work

An invaluable resource used with all year groups was the many pictures printed from the four CDs of photos in the Gypsy and Traveller Picture Library: "Celebrating diversity and promoting race equality", published by Durham and Darlington Education Service.

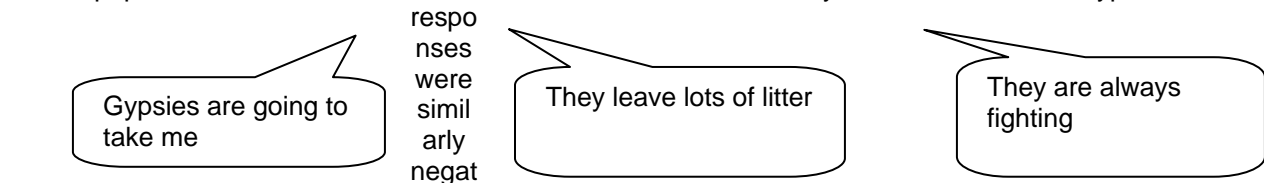
All work began by examining children's existing perceptions of Gypsies. This led to quality discussion and honest sharing, so much so that some of the work was left undone because it was more useful to give children time to ask question and consider a range of answers.

When Nursery/ Reception pupils were first asked: 'I wonder what you know about Gypsies?' responses were generally:



These comments were discussed and generalisations were explored. Could they be true? Work continued in small groups. An Irish Traveller persona doll called Joe told his story and answered questions. Role play activities took place in the Home Corner which was set up as a Trailer. Staff used photos of trailers, caravans and vardos to work on the pupils' attitudes, and answered questions about them.

When pupils in Years 1 and 2 were first asked 'I wonder what you've heard about Gypsies?' their



ive:

These comments were discussed and stereotypes were explored. How would we know if they were true? Pupils were asked to sort the photos into categories of their choosing and to think of questions to ask about at least one photo. They enjoyed seeing their home town in the photos of the fair and were curious about what they saw. They also enjoyed the story book A Horse for Joe by Margaret Hird and Ann

Whitwell, published by Wiltshire County Council.

When Year 3 and 4 pupils were initially asked 'What do you know about Gypsy Travellers?' responses were more positive. Some made comparisons with their own experience and lifestyle. Some children had been on holiday in a caravan or knew people who had. They discussed what it might be like to live in a trailer or vardo for much of the year and why Travellers may settle. When sorting the photos the pupils offered constructive comments and were interested in the life-style and culture depicted. They were motivated by the art competition which was to design something which represented the fair, using any artistic medium.

In Years 4 and 5 and 6 pupils were asked to jot down ideas on large sheets of paper on each table group entitled 'What have you heard about Gypsy Travellers and 'What do you know about Gypsy Travellers?' Some entrenched negative attitudes emerged at first. The myth about Travellers never paying tax had to be dispelled. A balanced argument about the issues appealed to them; the historical perspective was explained and they learned that 90% of traditional stopping places used for generations have been outlawed to Gypsies and Travellers. The range of views about Gypsies and Travellers was linked to literacy work on fact, opinion and rumour. Gradually some pupils recognised the contradictions in their opinions. They studied the photographs in detail and used them to ask many questions about Traveller lifestyle. They were interested in the arrangements for Travelling children to keep up schooling. Were there any in their school, they wondered? They worked on plans to build a Trailer and discussed how hard it would be to fit everything in.

As well as the resources previously mentioned pupils and staff had access to:

My Wonderful Place: the story of a journey to Appleby Fair by Sally Barter, published by London Borough of Hillingdon Traveller Education Service

A Time to Look Back Appleby Fair over the last 50 years, published by Barrie Law

A Time to remember A Collection of photographs of the travelling people and their way of life, published by Barrie Law

#### Outcomes:

Given the entrenched nature of prejudice in the town this work needs to be on-going. Teachers said they learnt a lot from these sessions and feel more confident to incorporate some of the ideas into future curriculum planning. Some were inspired to visit Fair Hill. Many pupils realised how easy it is to take on board stereotypes of a whole community. After the fair one boy said; *'I had never been up to Fair Hill. After we did the work in school about Gypsies I was really interested. I persuaded my parents and we went up there for the first time. We really enjoyed it.'*

## A Chinese Culture Week in an Infant School

### Numeracy:

Children used nets to make Chinese red money bags.

They practised counting by putting specific numbers of coins into the red money bags. This was a reference to the tradition that unmarried women have to give a special money bag to children that they know.

### History:

Children explored the history of Chinese New Year.

### Literacy:

Children explored traditional Chinese stories such as one in a Big Book of how the Chinese lunar calendar has years named after the twelve animals who came to say goodbye to Buddha before he died. Children wrote Chinese couplets.

### Music:

Children listened to and made Chinese music.

## CHINESE CULTURE WEEK

### Role play area

became a Chinese restaurant in one class & a Chinese takeaway in another class.

### PE:

Children practised moving like a dragon for the Dragon dance.

### Geography:

Children located China using

## More examples of Arts and Culture weeks:

### Hillcrest Primary School

from

<http://www.hillcrest.bristol.sch.uk/artswalk.html>

Karen Walsh, an installation artist, worked with Hillcrest Primary during their Arts Week to create an installation, 'Step by Step', reflecting the children's personalities within the school. A representative was chosen from each class to work with Karen to produce a moving/floating installation, hanging and primarily made out of clay, that recognises the self exploration and development of the children when they go through the transition from an infant (Year 2) to a junior (Year 3).

The whole school was involved in the creation of a glass painted mural. Groups of children throughout the week painted a mural, designed by the whole school, onto panes of glass which was then placed onto a large window; a focal point of the façade of the school.

Pupils designed and made fantastical costumes and set for A Midsummer Nights Dream, a musical performed by Year 6s during the exhibition showing all the work pupils had done during the week.

### Fox Hill Primary School

from

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/documents/857507>

Fox Hill Primary serves an inner-city area of Sheffield with over 50% of its children entitled to a free school meal. Over 40 teaching and support staff work together to educate a large population of 400+ pupils aged from 3-11 years.

There are very few minority ethnic heritage pupils on roll although in recent weeks 3 children from Afghanistan have joined the register. The school lies in a predominately white area of the city. Staff had long been concerned about the narrow range of ethnic diversity and cultural experiences within the lives of their pupils and the tensions that these limitations could engender. They decided to broaden local opportunities by working together towards a Multicultural Arts week.

The Multicultural Arts week involved every child from Nursery to Year 6, their parents and members of the local community. It aimed to

- challenge many of the ingrained racial stereotypes in the community
- celebrate difference and diversity
- give participants new and wide ranging artistic opportunities
- use the opportunity to build a positive image for the area
- learn from adults who usually work outside education
- develop new skills and have enjoyable teaching and learning experiences

### How was the project funded?

Planning for the week was done in conjunction with the Cultural Development Worker from the local Education and Lifelong Learning organisation SPELL-NE. The development officer's knowledge of relevant artists and performers with whom the school could work proved to be an invaluable asset.

Funding for the week's activities was of course a major concern. Alan made a bid to the SPELL-NE Cultural Fund targeted around multi-culturalism and community involvement and was delighted to receive a grant of £1870. SPELL-NE is a voluntary community organisation of 20 workers funded largely from SRB. Its mission is to widen participation into education and training for adults living in a regeneration area.

### The programme of events

The 5 day programme involved every member of staff both teaching and support and all the children working with a range of artists in a wide variety of new experiences such as Arabic Dancing, Tabla playing, Story telling and Caribbean cooking. Each class produced pieces of work around the overall

theme. One member of staff worked with a vertically aged group to produce a photomontage of the events.

Sport played its part too. The Sheffield based Black Footballers organisation brought display materials and representatives into the school. They worked outside with the children using Street Kick. The motto of the group is "Football unites, racism divides". Both black and Asian footballers shared their love of the game with Fox Hill pupils as they worked together developing skills.

The celebrated local boxing coach, Brendan Ingle and two talented young West Indian boxers brought a boxing gym into school. Pupils were fascinated to watch the dazzling footwork and athletic skills of the boxers. Brendan spoke to the children at length about his own heritage and the prejudices he faced when he first arrived in England in the 1950s from Ireland. He made the issues come alive in with his talk which captivated the children, holding them spell bound and increasing their awareness of the extent to which people can suffer due to racial differences and mis-conceptions.

Parents also played their part. The school is the permanent meeting venue for the Parents Writing Group. During the week this group was invited to read some of its work to an audience of Year 6 pupils.

Staff from the School Meals Service entered into the spirit and purpose of the week by providing a different menu each day serving food from `around the world`. Learning Mentor Alan Watson spoke of his gratitude to the catering staff and remembered, "The sight of children eating sukiyaki whilst bobbing up and down to Reggae Dub music will not easily be forgotten."

The highlight undoubtedly was a week-long visit to the school by the Music and Dance Director of the Sunduza Dance Theatre, Simon Banda, from Zimbabwe. Every child had the opportunity during the week to work with this special artist in residence.

The culmination of the week's activities occurred on Friday afternoon with a Celebration Festival performed to an audience of parents, governors, local councillors and members of the community. Children of all ages brought their work to the Festival and Year 5 produced a special adaptation of a Zimbabwean fairy tale. Parents particularly enjoyed the Festival and were happy to see their children taking part in activities which they had never before envisaged. Governors showed their support by their attendance and were very positive in their praise.

## **Did the project fulfil its aims?**

One of the aims of the week was to gain positive publicity for the local area. The school was delighted when staff and pupils were invited onto the BBC Radio Sheffield Breakfast programme to talk about their Arts Week. The local newspaper also published a feature and funding allowed the school to make use of the services of the Montenev Video Group, a local self-organised adult community workshop, who produced a professional video as a permanent record of the week.

Overall the event was an outstanding educational success for all involved in terms of fun, learning and opportunity. It is impossible to judge whether all the aims were accomplished. Whether the youngsters carry into their teenage and adult lives positive attitudes towards others of a different race or culture is an immeasurable at this stage. However in the short term the school is certain that influences were more than effective.

Mike Hodson from SPELL-NE praised the school in saying "This was a good example of a school using its local links to develop extra-curricula learning involving parents and the local community. The project was innovative and ground breaking. Several local professionals were gloomy about this project in such an area of the city but I am delighted to say that it was an enormous success – parents embraced it whole-heartedly. The success was down to the enormous amount of work put into it by all the staff but particularly Alan the learning mentor. It was good to see a school using itself as a resource for the whole community connecting learning with regeneration in a mutually supportive and interesting context."

Alan Watson said "It brought enormous enjoyment to all involved, provided opportunities not otherwise available and enhanced the profile of the school both locally and throughout the city."

The headteacher, Jim Fryer, has been invited to work part time for the EiC Partnership in Sheffield to develop a programme to meet the needs of primary children across the city. He aims to bring groups of

children with their Learning Mentors and other adults into the city centre to experience a wide range of opportunities during the summer holidays, giving them pride in Sheffield, increasing their learning and culminating in a prestigious Citizenship Award.

## Ideas from Big Arts Week

<http://www.bigartsweek.com/>

Big Arts Week is an initiative inviting professional artists to volunteer their time and share their skills to inspire local children in primary and secondary schools throughout the country. In 2006 it happened during the week of 19 - 23 June. The campaign was launched in 2002 and the response from the teachers, children, artists and parents and local communities was very enthusiastic.

A recent survey showed that despite creative industries being worth more than £67 billion a year to our national economy, 80 per cent of UK teachers are hard-pushed to find time for the arts. This means thousands of schoolchildren receive only a rudimentary introduction to the creative world.

### **Themes:**

Children will often relate well to activities that are local or topical (e.g. Olympic or World Cup themes), but other popular themes include:

**School History:** Many schools choose to base their Arts and Culture Week on a particular aspect of their school history, such as an emblem, local history or a prominent individual linked to the school.

**Animals – real or imaginary:** prove a great source of inspiration to springboard project ideas for all creative disciplines. Think about habitat, colour and interaction.

**Self portraits:** The self portrait allows an exploration of how we view ourselves and each other. Don't just think factual, there is plenty of scope to explore the abstract interpretation of self.

### **The South Bank Show:**

Pupils usually love this one. A few pupils interview the artist in front of the whole school or on video (for the others to watch later). The school can then produce a documentary incorporating the interview with a performance by the guest, and/or some pupils. Work with pupils on their interview techniques and their performances to camera in advance.

### **The poet-tree:**

Make a poet-tree in the school garden or in the entrance hall. Students can write poems and stories in response to an artist's work, then copy their work out onto leaf-shaped pieces of paper. These are then hung from a real tree in the school garden (or from an imitation one in the school entrance hall). Organise a reading to be performed under the tree.

### **Coming up roses:**

If you want to design a project of lasting benefit to your community, and have access to a garden designer, consider designing a multi-sensory, fully accessible garden, either on school grounds or for residents at a nearby care home. Once the initial plans have been drafted by a professional, all students and/or classes could draw up their own versions and help to decide on the plants to go into the garden.

### **A stitch in time:**

Make a Tracey Emin-style quilt. The visiting artist can help design it and, as with an American wedding quilt, everyone in school – from the head teacher to the caretaker, as well as the students – can put (at least) a stitch in the quilt during the week. With luck, and the support of some enthusiastic participants, you might finish it before the end of the week, ready to be displayed on the Monday morning. Give the quilt a theme, making its content relevant to the life of the school now or in the past.

### **Friday night's all right, all right:**

Inspire the students to compose their own pieces of group music and/or writing, whether songs, poems, short fiction, or instrumental pieces. They can then perform them in front of their year group(s)/ the whole school on a Friday night 'club night'. If there are any enthusiastic would-be DJs around, invite them to play their favourite tracks before or after the students perform.



