

Gypsy Stories &

Thursday, 25 May 2017

Traveller Tales

Literacy, Arts and Crafts Workshops for Romani, Traveller & Other Children, Key Stage 2

The lesson/workshop will use the story, *Ossiri and the Bala Mengro* (2016), by Richard O'Neill and Katherine Quarmby, as the basis for arts and crafts workshops from this rich, traditional story, with Romani, Traveller and other children in south-west Wales. The project will integrate arts and crafts activities with literacy activities, to inspire, educate and engage *all* children and to bring aspects of Romani and Traveller life, language and culture to the wider community.

*“Ossiri was a
Traveller
girl... ‘Tattin Folki’,
or rag-and-bone
people...”*



The arts and crafts activity will be using simple materials, such as paper, card, fabric, scrap materials and natural ‘found’ objects, such as leaves, twigs, dried flowers, and paints, sequins and colours, to fashion highly stylised horse-shoes, as symbols of luck and Romani and Traveller culture.

The story can be read aloud, with the children following (to develop and encourage understanding and reading skills, relating the project to Key Stage 2 literacy targets), possibly supported by Romani and Traveller parents and carers, taking an active role in the classroom. The arts and crafts session will follow, with the children using pre-formed templates that can be decorated and coloured, affixed to wall panel celebrating Romani and Traveller culture during Gypsy, Roma, Traveller History Month (June), for example.

The project could develop further, with the children creating and telling their own story using their horse-shoes, with a short delivery of each story involving movement and music and with back-drops or scenery

being created behind the story-tellers and story characters, to create a more sophisticated performance, which might be video-recorded as a series of digital narratives.



Project

Resources

The project would require arts & crafts materials (paper, card, etc.), children's scissors, adhesives, acrylic paints, brushes, feathers, leaves, etc.

Copies of the book, *Ossiri and the Bala Mengro*, Richard O'Neill, Katherine Quarmby, with Hannah Tolson's wonderful illustrations, published by Child's Play International, Sydney (ISBN 978-1-84643-924-7)

Story-teller/workshop leader/teacher

Teaching or learning assistants (from the Romani and Traveller communities)

Romani and Traveller parents and carers

Story-telling

The story-telling sessions would introduce the characters in the story

Arts and crafts workshop/s

The decoration of the horse-shoes, card-templates, etc. with materials and colouring.

Finishing decorating horse-shoes and fixing the finished horse-shoes to the panel.

Children's own stories, with the children as characters involved

Venues

The workshops could be carried out in local schools, Children's Centres, or on sites where Gypsies and Travellers live, with groups in each location being mixed (in order to encourage inter-communal dialogue and increase trust, cooperation and collaboration between Romani, Traveller and other children), strengthening inclusion and social cohesion.

*Ossiri couldn't let go
of her dream. She
yearned to play
music. . .*

Target Groups

Primary aged children (5-11 years). Parents and carers would also be encouraged to join these workshops, especially those parents and carers that are from Romani groups whose first language is not English or Welsh, Travellers and Gypsy parents and carers who are story-tellers or are descendants of story-tellers.

Teaching Plan

Arts and crafts, literacy workshops	Time(s)	Teacher Activity	Pupil Activity	Evaluation
Aims	To introduce Romani and Traveller story-telling and crafts; to encourage pupils creativity; to understand aspects of Romani culture; to challenge stereotypes through positive role models (instructors)			
Learning Outcomes	Pupils will have produced an individual arts piece based upon the Romani and Traveller story; pupils will have learned about Romani and Traveller culture and crafts			
Previous knowledge of pupils/students	Some general knowledge about Romani and Traveller people; some misinformation and stereotypes about Romani and Traveller people			
Materials & Equipment	Arts & crafts materials (paper, card, etc.), children's scissors, adhesives, acrylic paints, brushes, feathers, leaves, etc.			
Brief summary of content	The story-telling sessions would introduce the characters in the story (20-25 minutes); The creation of the horse-shoes, card-templates, etc. Some decorating and colouring (1 hr. 15 mins.); Break (20 minutes); Finishing decorating horse-shoes and fixing (1hr. 15 mins.); Final stories, with the children as characters involved in movement and mime (15-20 minutes)			
Assessment of pupil/student learning	Questions and answers about the story, characters, etc.; masks and decorations			
Structure & Sequence	9:00/13:00	Introduction of the workshop, activities and personnel;	Listening/responding	Questions to ensure each pupil/student has a clear understanding of the activities;
	9:10/13:10	Introducing the history of Romani and Traveller people (teacher, Romani parents); Setting up the activities quietly at the tables (teaching assistants);	Listening/responding	Story-telling questions, i.e. "Do you know what happened next?" etc.
	9:20/13:20	Introducing the arts and crafts workshops;	Listening/responding	Questions to ensure each pupil/student

				understands the tasks;
	9:30/13:30	Break into groups of 7 children to 1 adult to begin making the horse-shoes and decorating them (teacher, TA's, parents and carers);	Sticking, cutting, painting, decorating;	Supporting each of the children in their creative work;
	10:00/14:00	Break-time: ensure the children understand that they will be continuing after the break (teacher, TA's);	Playing	Assess the degree of work needed for each child to finish their horse-shoes;
	10:15/14:15	Back into groups to continue decorating masks (teacher, TA's, parents and carers);	Decorating the horse-shoes;	Supporting each child to finish their work on time;
	10:40/14:40	Finish work on masks with children, final help in decorating (teacher, TA's);	Completing their work decorating horse-shoes;	Assessing finished piece to ensure that children have a 'product' to take away;
	11:00/15:00	Introduce movement with children's stories; improvise story with masks and movement/tableau	Putting up horse-shoes and helping others put up theirs; participating in the movement/tableau;	Assessing the engagement of the children with the story and activities;
	11:20/15:20	Finish workshop; satisfaction survey; questions about Romani and Traveller stories and Romani and Traveller people;	Listening/responding	Questions about learning outcomes "What do you know about Romani Gypsies now?", etc.