

A production at Handsworth Grange School

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Handsworth Grange School, Sheffield

□ The School

Handsworth Grange School, a co-educational local authority secondary school in Sheffield, has an intake of some 180 students a year, drawn principally from local housing estates. Handsworth Grange has been open for just four years, so had the considerable advantage of establishing positive policies towards curriculum innovation from the start.

The Technology team was established by appointing staff from a variety of backgrounds all of them with a positive view of the subject and innovation within it. Such was the department's confidence that Technology was introduced (in match with the National Curriculum) a full year before this was legally necessary.

□ The School Production

The School Production was a major cross curricular initiative involving the areas of Technology, PE/Dance, Art, Music, and Drama. A particular emphasis was placed on the development of Information Technology within the project.

Care of the environment was the central issue of the project and was delivered through the musical production 'Along Came Man'.

The bringing together of all these areas to create the school production meant much detailed planning, many meetings and the whole hearted co-operation of all teachers and pupils involved. The necessity to co-ordinate actions, meet deadlines and solve every conceivable problem meant that teamwork was crucial to its success.

The School Production provided a number of opportunities for problem solving and the pupils of Year 8 were involved in every area of the creation production of Along Came Man. This included props, scenery, music, dance, acting, refreshments, advertising, tickets... In fact everything you would associate with the presentation of a musical production.

□ Management of the project

To support the work we purchased a number of pieces of software and underwent the appropriate INSET to be able to utilise this software. In addition INSET for staff on Dance,

Handsworth Grange School
Presents
ALONG CAME MAN
 IN THE HALL
 PERFORMED BY ARTS
 TIME 7:30pm
 DATE JULY 4th
 NAME
 50P



Video and Super 8, working alongside experts (from the Rotherham Arts Centre), was provided — thus providing 16 afternoons of INSET for the price of 2 days cover.

All pupils experienced two aspects of the project, doing different work on a Thursday afternoon from that on a Wednesday morning. The pupils negotiated their own tasks within the group, and chose to be involved in both performing and providing the technology support or to do two different technology support tasks. The work of the pupils was either on show in a display to complement the performances, or as one of the chosen designs in the actual performance.

Delivery

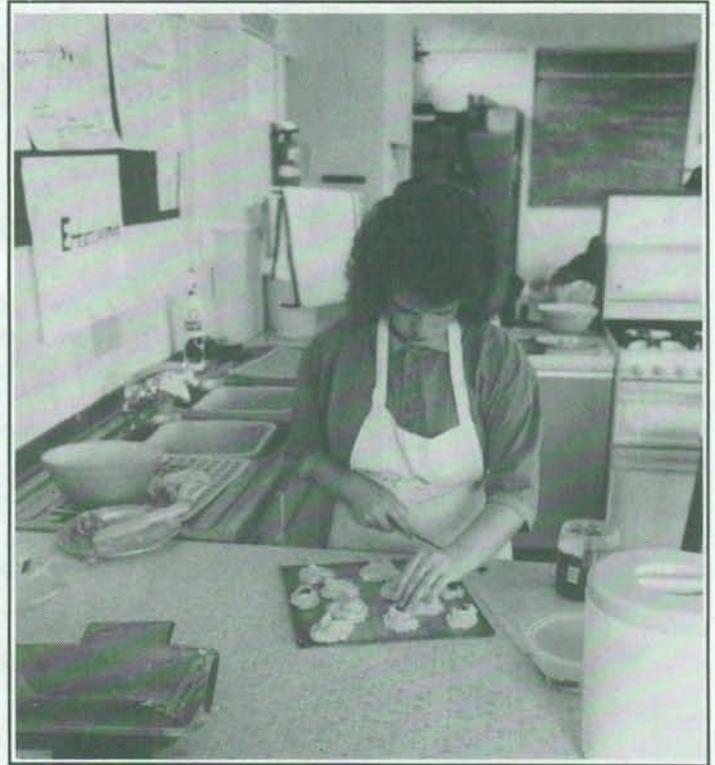
'Along Came Man' was only a musical score, so all other aspects of the work were developed on a problem solving basis with pupils.

The work was carried out in two blocks.

1. All pupils worked in groups on one of the following:- Refreshments (Home Economics), Costume Design (Art/Textiles), Masks (Art/Textiles), Scenery (CDT) and Computer Work (IT),
2. Pupils decided if they wanted to be Technologists or Performers. Technologists chose from the following: Scenery (Art/Textiles), The Environment (Home Economics), Scenery and Video (CDT).

Performers chose from the following:
Dance (Physical Education), Singing (Music), Sound Production (Music) and Performing (Drama).

Staff working with performers took larger groups to allow Technologists to do more detailed work.



Evaluation/Review

Pupils assessed their participation in the project after the performances.

The project was assessed by staff on an individual basis, as soon as possible after the performances, over lunch provided from funds. This was found to be very advantageous.

Lessons learnt, problems overcome

Not enough time for staff to meet to liaise on the development of the project and especially in the preparation for the production.

IT INSET needed to be frequent, ongoing and IT support was absolutely necessary.

Record evaluation at intervals throughout the process.

The factors which facilitated/contributed to its success

Good staff involvement and organisation
Money to pull in outside expertise (Rotherham Arts Centre).
Pupils eager to learn and cope with new achievements.
A lot of choice for pupils.
Time provided by JSA funding for planning and INSET.
PE and music staff gave up free time on Thursday afternoons so they could participate further in the project.

The focus of the project

a. *Set/Scenery*

The TECHNOLOGY SCENE included; Flashing Lights, Computer Control, Pneumatics, Animation on Computer Screen, Circuitry, Frankenstein Image, Disco Lights & Atari Sound Effects. The DESERT SCENE used recycled Junk, Coke Cans to make the Palm Tree.



b. Refreshments

Mass Production, Costed their products using the Gas Analyser + IT. Nutritional Aspects, Market Research. Spreadsheet, Price List of Refreshments Economic Awareness. 'Litter Campaign' Ways of dealing with waste and packaging.

c. Costume

Used 'Spirit of the Earth' as a theme for the designing and making costumes for the performance using Tie-Dye and both hand and machine sewing. Used Artisan II and Delux Paint 3.

d. Documentation

Designed and produced a logo, the tickets, programmes and advertising the performance using Impressions, a Scanner and FontFX. Produced a layout of the theatre, book seats and costed out the performance using Box Office and Grasshopper.

e. Masks

Based on all the extinct species mentioned in the DoDo song and more. Used Artisan II and Delux Paint 3.

e. Video

A small group of pupils recorded the work in the task areas e.g. rehearsals, scenery making, computer work. This should have involved planning and video editing. They made a video of the final performance.

f. Dance

Work related to the project, with support from Anthony Waller.

g. Music

Singing — Learnt songs from 'Along Came Man', worked on stage presentation, work with microphones, solo work and co-ordinating singing with backing tracks. Sound Production — Created sound effects for different scenes using a synthesiser and a 4 track tape recorder.

h. Drama

Performing — Worked on the 5 scenes for the environment. Technology Age, Rain Forest, Desert, Meadows and Oceans. This work included role play, simple lighting, prop making, make-up and simple movement.

Benefits for the development of technology

Good relationships were established between pupils and staff. A well integrated project that appeared to be very well accepted by participants, audiences at the performance and input from staff involved.

For students

'A real purpose to the pupil's work with the resulting public performance. A greater awareness of the many facets of putting on a public performance'.

Some pupils took part in the performance who would not normally have done so.

Widened pupil's perception of what Technology is all about.



Pupils quickly became adept at skills which normally take time to learn.

Experience of working together to meet deadlines. Having to adapt to limitations of materials and time. Realising work will be under public scrutiny.

MOST OF ALL THEY ENJOYED IT!

For staff/school

Experience with cross curricular subjects thought to be very beneficial.

Increased profile of Technology in school.

Increased profile of the school in the community.

Increased IT ability of the staff involved and awareness of IT potential.

What next

Continue to inservice informally within the team.

Use the experiences learnt from this venture to help develop a similar project next year — perhaps allowing a longer preparation time e.g. 10 weeks.

