

Our initial interest was aroused in early September by the visit of Dave Wallbank, a crew member of the yacht *Pride of Teesside*, to Kingswood School.

The children were fascinated by the intense preparations required for such an amazing voyage. Excitement increased as they were allowed to try on clothing for varying temperatures and question followed question as the children became aware of the tremendous commitment of the crews.

There was more excitement as three Year 6 children with two accompanying governors left Corby British Steel to visit Southampton on the Saturday prior to the launch. They were allowed on board the *Pride of Teesside*, to be shown round by John Wilson. Many photos were taken and a video made.

Back at school each child produced a report for the rest of the class. A report of the Kingswood visit and a showing of the video was given to the whole school.

One group then began an imaginary schedule of exercises called 'Smile, this is going to hurt', which they tried out with great hilarity on the rest of the class. A second group produced a very-large-scale world map, and yacht cut-outs on pins, with which we tracked each yacht's progress. This came from daily television 'up-dates' brought in by Neil Hubbard each lunchtime.

A third group worked to produce illustrations of early sailing boats and followed this with drawings of each British Steel Challenge yacht.

A fourth group was busily engaged building a large yacht from junk we could scrounge, and each child produced an individually designed yacht. These were made from balsa wood and painted to appropriate colours. Various hull shapes were tested in water to ascertain speed, smoothness of movement and buoyancy. Experiments for waterproofing materials followed, leading on to work with the weather. Rain gauges, anemometers and thermometers were constructed. Language associated with pressure, clouds, wind speeds and temperature was learnt and a large display board began to take shape.

Great interest was shown in the types of food necessary and a good display of dehydrated food was made. Groups of supervised children then made up, and of course ate, paellas, beef risottos, chocolate, soups and drinks. A very successful activity!

Following the British Steel worksheets, work continued with all aspects of safety.

Much discussion, writing and artwork came from this, and was further stimulated by watching the video of the 1990 Round the World Whitbread Challenge Race. This we did weekly and there is still a lot to see!!!

By the middle of September the crews were well on their way to Rio de Janeiro and

British Steel Challenge at Weldon C.E. Primary School

Joyce Wing

Weldon C.E. Primary School, Northamptonshire

Left to right: Fiona Poone, Kevin McConnell, Neil Hubbard and Kimberley Hecton.



Testing hull shapes for speed



children were becoming interested in map positions. Latitude and longitude were taught and atlases perused to follow the journey. This led to considerable work on co-ordinates, angles and positions. We learnt about stars, sun and instruments used in navigation.

We watched a video of the voyages of Christopher Columbus and his use of early instruments and life on board his ships compared with modern day sailing. Sand timers and a quadrant were constructed. Astrolabes and cross-staff were talked about.

Following this the children devised their own systems to run the yachts. How to keep safe in the galley and the correct terms for each part of the yacht were covered. Much imaginative writing of poems and stories, illustrating their feelings in various weathers was now underway and we learnt poems by Masefield 'Cargoes' and 'Sea Fever'. Many excellent paintings and drawings of imaginary sea-creatures and maritime dangers were produced. Music and imaginative movement were playing an important part in their learning. The children were asked to accompany sea poems with percussion



DESIGN/TECHNOLOGY

AT 1, 2, 3, 4

Design and make yachts
Design and make rain gauges/
barometers/anemometers/wind vane
Build and test varying hull shapes
Testing materials for water resistance
Design safe kitchens
Floatation and forces

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Simulation program:
'Into the Unknown'

HISTORY

HCSU 6

Life and travels of Christopher
Columbus
Captain Cook
Dias

PE — MOVEMENT

Exercises in preparation for the
voyage to keep participants fit and
healthy.
Creative Dance/Drama based on a
voyage made by Christopher
Columbus

ART

AT 1, 2

Trace maps
Copy yacht pictures
Pictures in all media of storms,
wrecks, sailors
Historical pictures
Historical boats

ROUND THE WORLD YACHT RACE

ENGLISH

AT 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Descriptive writing after viewing
videos
Poems of sea (learn)
Sea Shanties (listen)
Reportive writing of visits
Reportive writing of meeting crew
members
Speaking and reporting to ET and
possibly Radio Northampton
Comprehensions from British Steel
worksheets
Divising a game using grid system.

SCIENCE

AT 1, 2, 3, 4

Variations in temperature, wind,
rainfall, humidity, cloud pressure
Structure of the earth — volcanoes
Be aware of sand/sails/rocks
Understand food chains
Varying localities
Effects of farming, quarrying, mining
and industry
Solar system

GEOGRAPHY

AT 1, 3

Maps — weather maps — projections
Capitals — continents
Sea routes — currents — winds
Yacht's journey against prevailing
winds and currents
Life on board — diet — clothing —
routines — safety

Teachers planning of the
cross-curricular theme.

instruments and we attempted to compose our own stormy/calm pieces. Creative movement took the form of a dance drama based on a sailing ship similar to the one Christopher Columbus would have used. Preparation involved pulling, pushing, twisting, turning, heaving, hauling, resisting — strong, firm, direct, stable, held movements which developed into loading the ship, weighing anchor, climbing rigging, hauling ropes, scrubbing decks.

Contrasted with this was the preparation which involved actions where tension was released, movements were labile, flowing, less direct, which became the actions of the sailors during relaxation — when singing shanties, when drunk or even when the ship encountered stormy seas. Working rhythms were explored and various grouping possibilities as children worked in pairs, larger groups and individually. A story-line was developed where sailors were gathered up from quayside taverns, pressganged into service, loaded the ship, set sail and finally after many trials reached dry land.

In late September the crews were nearing Rio and it was felt that letters should be sent to the crews and yachts of their choice. Each child included much news of school life and the work they were undertaking.

This gave us the opportunity to form links with Corby Brook City Technology College who were using Campus 2000.

A mini-bus was duly hired, the class divided into three groups and Mr Rushton, our computer link teacher at the City Technology College, explained how messages could be sent and received via this satellite link. Each group was allowed to ask questions, which were typed through to the yachts. Of course, first and foremost, 'Did you receive our letters?'

We heard later, from John Wilson's sister that our letters had been received and would we continue to write, as life on board could be lonely. In February a long letter was received from the crew of the yacht Rhone Poulenc, and also a post-card from Group 4. Newspapers continued to be sent from British Steel. These were cut and made into scrap-books. We watched the BBC video of the first leg of the

Design a Yacht Where to start

1. The boat Will have to float go through gales, carry people. They Will have to move about, Sleep, eat, cook, Shower, and They Will need Storage. ✓
2. The yacht Will have to go through rough seas, The doldrums, roaring forties, and Cape horn. ✓
3. The boat Will have to carry fourteen people. ✓
4. The Space Will be 100 square metres each. ✓
5. They Will use the bow to Store the sails. ✓
6. The boats cost Half a million. ✓
7. The boats hull is made of steel which is 4mm thick ✓
8. They Will be safe because they Will have Waterproof clothing, safety harness, an inflatable jackets, luminous patches, and a radio beacon. ✓
9. They Will have a galley, cabins, bunks, heads, Storage, and a drying room. ✓
10. I think that they should develop new parts ✓

Good work ★

Michael Seyer

race, and continued to chart the yachts' progress through to Hobart, where they arrived on January 24th.

We are continuing to follow the yachts' progress via television and British Steel Newspapers. More letters have been written to await the crew's arrival in Cape Town at the end of March and a recording of the BBC programme covering the second leg of the journey is currently being viewed and discussed. We are also now turning our attention to earlier sailing times and discovering the voyages of Captain Cook, Columbus, Dias and the effects of their discoveries on the native populations of the new lands. We are particularly interested in the Aztecs and the journeys of Cortes.

We look forward to the return of the crews and hope a visit to Southampton, to welcome them, will be possible.

Although the disc from British Steel was incompatible with our computer, we were able to use the computer program Into the Unknown.

This is a Learning Package simulating a 15th century Voyage of Discovery.