

HISTORY DETECTIVES!

Ashley Grey writes about an IAMS holiday project in partnership with Highbury Fields School

We recruited 23 students from years 7, 8 & 9 who spent three days of February half-term investigating the terrible 19th century crime of Baby Farming in Islington.

Our project included a trip to the London Dungeon which gave the students a real feel for the atmosphere and a hands-on understanding of the crime and punishments used at that time. This was followed by an afternoon of research at Islington Archives where they looked at newspapers of the 1900s and gathered evidence on the case. Students then spent two days with local author Caitlin Davies who has written a book on two Islington baby farmers, Amelia Sach and Annie Walters. On the last day students re-enacted the court case at The Old Bailey. This was brought to



life vividly by using wonderful artefacts and costumes loaned by Islington Education Library. Having props such as a Victorian baby feeding bottle, smelling salts, a midwifery kit, a doctor's apparatus, quill pens and a real death certificate, gave the students an amazing experience and really heightened the performance. Feedback from the students showed that the costumes and artefacts were highlights of the course. Overall they rated the event 5 star and we now hope to set up a monthly History Detectives Club which will feature outings, time travel and performances of historical events.

Shereen Nassuna a Y8 student at IAMS said:

'It was much more fun than I thought it was going to be and I would have liked another day. I definitely want to do more of this sort of project, because it was brilliant, especially the costumes. I played Mrs Seal the Landlady, and wearing a Victorian dress and bonnet made me appreciate what it was like for women more than a hundred years ago'

For more information on joining the History Detectives contact Ashley Grey on greya@iams.islington.sch.uk

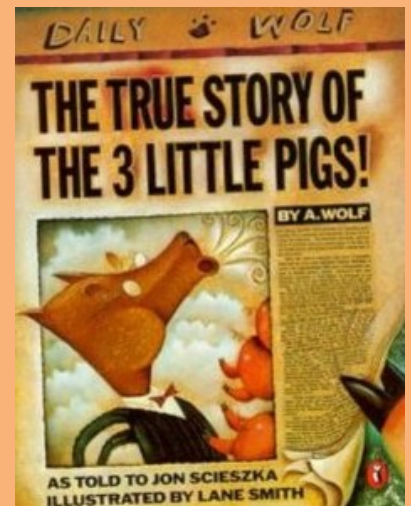


My Favourite Book...

Rachael Boyce, Christ the King teacher, now on maternity leave.

The True Story Of The 3 Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka.

I love sharing this story with any child of any age and it has gone down extremely well every year with our Reading Champions Club (boys and girls)! The story is told through the extremely funny wit of Alexander T. Wolf and the illustrations are hilarious too, adding to the visual impact of the story. It also enables great discussion and drama work to take place - as lots of children enjoy playing both characters – either the wolf or the pig!



Free Foreign Language Books



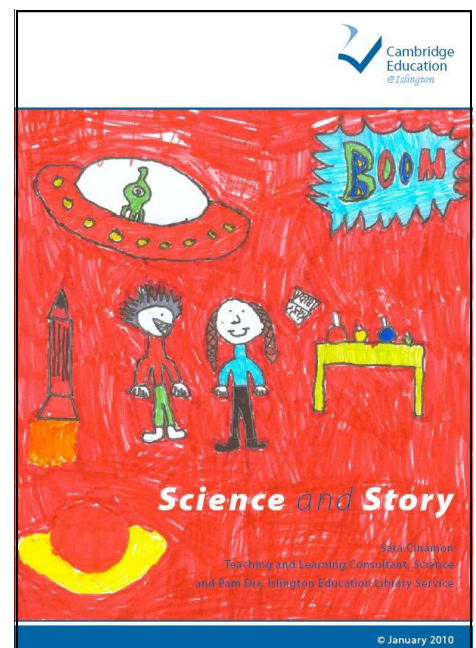
Macmillan Publishers, based at Kings Cross, recently gave ELS a donation of over 2000 foreign language books! These were mostly European fiction and non-fiction titles but also included

Korean, Mandarin, Taiwanese, Malay, Afghan and Arabic. In total over 30 languages were represented. We used the books to boost the ELS stock and gave the rest to schools. Teachers, EMAS colleagues and librarians from 44 different primary and secondary schools in Islington and neighbouring boroughs selected books or were allocated a share based on the school's language profile. We were particularly excited by children's books in languages that are hard to find in the UK like Slovakian, Lithuanian, Polish and Russian. As Cathie the librarian at St Aloysius said 'The boys were so enthusiastic to find football books in Polish – they had never seen any before'.

New Resources List

Look out for our *Science and Story* resources list.

Copies have been sent to you school. Also available on the ELS website.



Environmental Treasure Chest

The library has three Environmental Treasure Chests for loan and these have recently been updated. They were prepared jointly with the Sustainable Schools Initiative in Islington. Exciting new inclusions are an emergency wind up mobile phone charger, the DVD of *Wall-E* and some new resources on travel and traffic.

The boxes are available for three-week loans. Order on a separate loan request form clearly stating the weeks that you need it. Do this in advance so that the box can be booked for you.

For more information about the Sustainable Schools Initiative in Islington go to:

www.islington.gov.uk/environment/sustainability/sus_atschool/

War Horse

By Charlotte Eilenberg, Books Champion, Montem Primary School



This term at Montem twelve Y6 children and I have been reading Michael Morpurgo's *War Horse*. It's an epic (sometimes relentless) canter through muddy trenches, the wounded and the dying which will take us, in the end, to the delights of the award-winning

play of the book. The stage version of *War Horse* transferred from the National Theatre to the West End last year. Thanks to a generous contribution from the school's PTA, we will soon see how the actors bring the text to life on stage. The children are also

writing their own books about *War Horse* with quizzes, maps, letters, and drawings.

From the moment we embarked on the project, the children devoured all the fabulous goodies from the ELS whose books, poems, photographs, maps and posters have been on display in and around the library, and have fuelled the children's imaginations. For example, two of the children have designed a poster advertising the horse, Joey, who is sold at auction; another imagined a diary entry by Albert, the little boy, when his beloved Joey is taken off to France to rescue the wounded; some children learnt the poem *The Soldier* by Rupert Brooke off by heart ("If I should die, think only this of me..."), and another child drew a map of First World War Europe. All of these ideas came to fruition thanks to the colourful diversity of the ELS resources.

By far the biggest challenge has been time. We meet for only an hour a week and, as half of this time is spent reading the book, our creative forays have had to be rather hurried. All of this pales into insignificance as we look forward to our spring visit to the theatre.

My Favourite Thing . . .

Sarah Gill
Artefacts Librarian



One of my favourite objects is in the costume collection. It's a young boy's embroidered and beaded waistcoat from Pakistan, layered with intricate patches from well loved clothes. The use of materials is so inventive. The maker has recycled old metal zips and used them for trimming, tracking them along the edges of the coat. Mother of pearl buttons decorate the front and back and there's a secret hand-stitched inside pocket. Though worn it still has a beauty reflecting the incredible sewing, weaving and textile skills of Pakistan.

What is a Peripatetic Librarian?

Sharon Smith is one of a team of library staff in ELS who work with primary schools to help them develop their school libraries.



What do you do in schools?

Everything I do with the children is aimed at getting them confident and excited about books and reading, and ensuring they can use their library to support this.

We talk about what they are reading, sharing their favourite books and authors. I may pick a topic to discuss and they learn

where to find books on that theme in the library. I teach general library skills; how the books are organised, why they are shelved in certain places, the difference between fiction and non-fiction and the structure of books. They learn a vocabulary to talk about books and are encouraged to think about who wrote it, who made it and how.

I use lots of games and activities in my sessions. We have compiled a Library Skills Pack for primary schools that will be available in the Summer term 2010. It has lots of suggestions for supporting library lessons based on 15 years of our experience.

I often use resources from the ELS. The children love it when I bring in new books and they know they are the first to read and review them. I bring in "mystery object" artefacts from our collection. We'll use the objects as a talking point; what are they made from, what are they for, who would have used them. Sometimes the class works in groups. They use library books to

research the object. They return to the class as "experts" and share what they've found out about their artefact and let other groups ask questions. This week I'm taking a 1950s lemon squeezer, a Roman toilet sponge, a Victorian ceramic inkwell, some silk cocoons and a Turkish coffee pot called a Cezve!

I do storytelling for the younger classes and often use soft toys and puppets from the ELS Artefacts. We sometimes focus on one author or illustrator and talk about how we can recognize their work.

The best part of my job is being with children. In my experience they love reading, they love changing their books and love seeing new books. I know it goes against perceptions of what interests children these days, but I find there is a huge appetite for books and pupils are really excited about visiting the library. As Claire, the Deputy Head at William Tyndale, said the other day, "Sharon, since you have been in the library the children don't think of reading as work".

What the schools say about having a librarian.

Claire Oliver, Deputy Head teacher, William Tyndale Primary School:

Having a librarian has contributed enormously to our whole school reading ethos. Children do not see reading as 'work' but as something which they really do for pleasure. Class teachers also benefit as they share class topics with the librarian who can then provide children with extra resources or further guidance on where to find information on these topics. Prospective parents also look favourably on this resource when they look around the school.

Alan Ward, Head teacher, St John's Highbury Vale School:

She has transformed our library into a stimulating environment. The children love working with Sharon in groups developing library and research skills. She has been a valuable member of our staff team.

Gemma Lee, teacher with responsibility for the Library, St John Evangelist School:

The children love the library sessions – they enjoy discussing their favourite books and choose titles based on others recommendations.

The opportunity to research topics is very helpful for teachers and children, and our librarian has a vast knowledge bank that we can draw on.

Having a dedicated library time shows the children that books and reading are very important – and fun!

If your school wants to buy into this service, please contact ELS