

Wardrobes

An Adventure In Learning

Summary of quantitative & qualitative evaluation findings from 2016's Wardrobes Adventure in 19 Birmingham classes.

Project created by KIT Theatre in partnership with Community Libraries Birmingham and Birmingham REP



Quantitative Evaluation Data

We carried out two pieces of Quantitative evaluation with teachers participating in the Wardrobes Adventure in Learning. The first survey was a pre and post survey which asked all participating teachers to identify desired outcomes across three areas at the start of the project and then assess whether these were achieved immediately afterwards. The three areas were:

- Individual Pupil Outcomes
- Whole Class Outcomes
- CPD outcomes for their own practice

9 teachers answered the survey with the following results:

Individual Pupil Outcomes – 100% felt the desired outcomes they identified in advance were met

Sample response A:

Pupil identified by teacher in advance: AJH “Struggles to maintain focus over extended period on a project”

Post-project report on pupil: “AJ's writing and realisation that he has to write for a wider audience has grown. He has improved his handwriting and tries hard to get more done. He has also agreed to give our school Reading Recovery Scheme a second go after giving up last time he tried. He says he really wants to get better at reading.”

(Oasis Academy Short Heath)

Sample response B:

Pupil identified by teacher in advance: M - “A pupil with global delay”

Post-project report on pupil: “M really enjoyed creating the story and taking on the role of the main character from the story. She was very keen to share her ideas for the story. She enjoyed acting out the story and using story language. She did really well with most of the activities including the guidebook.”

(Bordesley Green Primary School)

Sample response C:

Pupils identified by teacher in advance: H – “requires improved motivation and engagement”

Y – “Low confidence.”

Post-project report on pupil: “The storytelling part of the project really motivated these boys. H in particular was really engaged in the drama of the whole project and I think the whole idea of the time traveller and the secret agents really appealed to him.”

(Nansen Primary School)

Whole Class Outcomes – 100% felt the desired outcomes they identified in advance were met

Sample Response A:

Class Outcome identified in advance: ““Excellence and enjoyment - speaking, listening and writing opportunities”

Post-project report: "We have used every opportunity to promote writing - writing questions to ask our Time Traveller, the guidebook, letters to Time Traveller, recounts of all the visits. The children have produced some excellent work and have experienced writing in different genres and writing for an audience. They have thoroughly enjoyed Wardrobes and parents have been so engaged with the project too, asking questions and supporting the children in the work and projects we have sent home to complete."

(Holy Souls Primary School)

Sample Response B:

Class Outcome identified in advance: "More collaborative group work", "Developing speaking and listening", "Inspired writing"

Post-project report: "The visit by the Story Smith helped to develop group work through drama. Having the teacher working as a scribe worked very well as it allowed the children to keep working with the story teller and for ideas to be generated and recorded quickly. The drama in the workshop allowed all of the children to participate and all ideas were valued and included in the final story so that all of the children had ownership.

As a follow up to this part of the project we created and described our own monsters like the monster in the class story. The children's imaginations were really fired up and we had some great pieces of writing."

Sample Response C:

Class Outcomes identified in advance: "More imaginative and creative work" & "Improvement in story-telling and story writing."

Post Project report: On "*More imaginative and creative work*": "The children loved having Lily the storyteller in school and they were very creative with what they wanted to bring to the story. Having a purpose for their story really helped to inspire them to think more creatively."

On "*improvement in story-telling and story-writing*": "The children have really enjoyed writing stories this half term and many of them have brought elements of the story created with Lily to other pieces of writing."

Teacher's personal CPD Outcomes – 89% felt the outcomes they identified in advance were met

Sample Response A:

Pre-Project target identified: "I hope I will gain... confidence in performing. Improving to make literacy more relevant to real life."

Post Project report: "I feel that I have grown in expanding the curriculum and making it more exciting."

(Ark Tindal Primary School)

Sample Response B:

Pre-Project target identified: "Develop skills / creativity in 'writing for real'."

Post-Project Report: "New ideas for story writing and setting up writing for different audiences were great. Hopefully we have started a link with KIT that will continue."

Oasis Academy Short Heath

Sample Response C:

Pre Project target identified: ""Using role play / drama to inspire creative writing."

Post-Project Report: "The whole project was a really interesting experience and one I would love to repeat - having a real purpose for writing inspired the children."

Post-Project Survey Results

Our second piece of quantitative evaluation was a detailed post project survey sent to participating teachers which generated the following responses:

This includes 5 questions asking whether Wardrobes improved the following – with a rating from

- 1- no improvement
- 2 - slight improvement
- 3 - moderate improvement
- 4 - significant improvement
- 5 - great improvement

7 schools responded to the survey

Element improved	Average score out of 5 across all respondents
Children's passion for creative writing and reading	4.5 out of 5
Children's creative confidence	4.9 out of 5
Individual's ability to solve problems	3.7 out of 5
Class relationship with teachers	4.2 out of 5
Class knowledge of digital, email and IT programmes and practice	4.2 out of 5

Teachers also responded to the following questions in their post-project survey:

Question	Number of positive responses
Were your objectives for the project met?	4 out of 4 responses
Did class knowledge/usage of digital communication improve?	6 out of 6
Did SEN pupils engage well?	5 out of 7
Did EAL pupils engage well?	6 out of 7
Did high achieving pupils engage well?	6 out of 6
Was there an improvement in pupils'	6 out of 7

attitudes towards libraries?	
Did teacher confidence in using digital tools increase?	3 out of 6
Did teachers use the project as a launching point for follow up learning?	7 out of 7

Analysis of Quantitative findings

The most encouraging element of this quantitative feedback from participating teachers is that 100% of respondents felt that Wardrobes delivered the hoped-for impacts they'd identified for both their whole class and selected pupils. These findings support KIT's belief that Adventures in Learning can make transformative positive impact in the classroom environment.

The Wardrobes Adventure was focussed on developing pupils' creative confidence as story-writers and storytellers, and it is heartening that the highest scores given by teachers were for Children's Passion in Creative Writing (averaging 4.5 out of 5, where 5 is "great improvement") and Children's Creative Confidence (4.9 out of 5, where 5 is "great improvement").

We also noted that while 100% of responding teachers have used the Adventure in Learning as a Launchpad for follow-up learning, 11% felt that their pre-project aims for their own personal CPD development were not fully met. Our 2016-18 Inspiration Day project will seek to address this by focussing on bespoke post-project CPD training for teachers as we seek to embed AiL techniques into their ongoing teaching practice.

Qualitative Evaluation: Relevant Testimonials and Teacher Feedback on Wardrobes

Extract 1

Relevance: Impact on pupils' confidence and on SEN & EAL pupils – beneficial CPD impact on participating teachers.

Evaluation feedback from Amanda Anderson
Deputy Head
Nansen Primary School, Birmingham

"This 'Wardrobes adventure project' has really made a difference to our pupil's confidence - especially to those who do not always feel confident to contribute to lessons. It was lovely to hear our pupils ask questions to the professor at the REP.

Children who sometimes have difficulties staying on task were very engaged especially when Lily [the Storysmith] visited our school. They were all able to keep on task and make good contributions when writing their story for the time traveller.

Children with English as an Additional Language also really benefited from the project. They were able to rehearse the story with their peers and join in with key repetitive parts. They also showed a good understanding of what was happening when the small wooden wardrobe receiver with a flashing light lit up in the classroom and joined in to read the messages from the time traveller.

All of the children were really excited to go back to school and tell our head teacher the summoning spell! Throughout, the children have been engaged, motivated and at times mesmerised by what was happening, especially at Ward End Library when the time traveller came out of the wardrobe!

The teachers and teaching assistants have loved this experience right from the very start! It has helped them to build upon their skills in drama and speaking and listening and also how to bring the very best out of stories by making them creative.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved with the project for their help, guidance, support and enthusiasm.”

Extract 2:

Relevance: impact on pupils' confidence – particularly as authors – the effectiveness of using fictional characters to motivate learning & positive impact on pupils identified in advance

Evaluation Feedback from Sally Baxter
Year 2 Teacher
Oasis Academy, Short Heath

“All children now feel like authors! They have all written stories in class which were based on journeys in wardrobes. They loved this opportunity to take their own wardrobes where they wanted them to go, but used so much of the structure and style given to them by Miss Biscotti, our storysmith from KIT. They have also produced artwork to show where their wardrobe took them.

Chloe has decided that she wants to be an author and is bringing in short stories everyday (sometimes three a day!!)

Several children ask me if they can have "author time" in class - even today I have been asked twice. The children also seem to have an elevated sense of their own place in the world, not in a boastful way, but getting such commendations from a 'real' Professor has given those with low self esteem a small boost.

The library finale was a joy. There are some very shy children in the class but everyone of them performed the story with gusto!

Impact of project on Individual Pupils Identified at start of project:

“CR – hoped for change identified prior to project: increased confidence in sharing ideas”

CR is speaking more in class and has been very excited by the whole project. He is still reminding me to hide the wardrobe receiver when another teacher comes in the room.

IR/BD – hoped for change identified prior to project: confidence to speak in larger groups in English

It was good for these two EAL children to be able to join in fully with the performance by rehearsing and repeating the story to give them confidence.

Extracts 3 & 4:

Relevance: showcasing impact of participation and training on teachers' CPD – continuing to use techniques following project's end:

"Emailing characters has been really useful to engage the children and in follow up lessons we have sent a couple of emails just to say hi to keep the children motivated."

Josh Reid
Year 1 teacher
Ark Tindal Primary School

"It was given me ideas about how I can build a greater air of mystery and surprise by contacting the children through different mediums."

Jo Milburn
Year 2 Teacher
Oasis Academy Primary School

Extracts 5 and 6:

Relevance: underlining how Adventures in Learning offer teachers a platform from which to launch follow-up learning inspired by the adventure. (Everything mentioned below is work in addition to challenges created by KIT for the Wardrobes adventure.)

"We wrote our own stories based on the wardrobes. We also used the Victorians as our topic theme for the whole term. We were able to pretend that our time traveller wanted us to find out things about the Victorians so stemmed a lot of lessons from this."

Kate Tilley
Year 1 teacher
Ark Tindal Primary School

"We have researched school, transport, food, technology, leisure now and in 1865 and compared and contrasted. The children have had a DT project to produce their own Magical Wardrobe and these are on display. We have written our own individual wardrobe stories, letters to our TT, recounts of visits etc. We have learned some Victorian games and songs too!"

Maria Aldred
Year 1 teacher
Holy Souls Primary School