
A VIKING INVASION

A ground-breaking primary school in Middlesbrough is making full use of the support provided by Northern Grid for Learning and is integrating ICT to bring history to life in the classroom

Pupils at Caedmon Primary are in for a surprise on 3rd March 2006 when their school will be invaded by Vikings! The Vikings will storm the school before getting down to the important business of explaining to the children why their area has been chosen for invasion and what will happen next.

The Viking artisans will then spend one day a week immersing the children in the Viking world, teaching them traditional skills such as making leather shoes, pewter jewellery, clothing and pottery. A historically accurate Viking house will form the centre piece and parents and members of the local community will be encouraged to join in with the workshop activities.

As would be expected of a school which has just won Northern Grid's Overall Excellence in ICT award, Caedmon is integrating ICT into every area of this activity and is also expanding this History based project across Literacy and Drama elements of the curriculum. Every aspect of the Viking invasion will be videoed and recorded by the children, who will then use their ICT evidence to inform and explore their discussion of events such as the Viking raid.

The Viking invasion is a core element of an ongoing Spring Term project which will culminate in 10 children from Caedmon visiting their Danish partner, Jellebakkeskolen in Aarhus. In January Year 5 and 6 pupils from Caedmon started this exciting project with a two day visit to York, undertaking a programme of work organised by the Jorvick Viking Centre and the York Archaeological Trust. Having recorded their experiences in audio, digital and video the children are already working on editing a DVD to show their peers. Meanwhile, pupils at Jellebakkeskolen were undertaking the same task at a Viking museum in their area and videoconferencing between the schools is due to start within the next month and will continue up to, and during, Caedmon's visit to Denmark.

Caedmon pupils have previously demonstrated their ability to use ICT as an integral part of their learning with projects such as the Ironstone Project. In this project Year 6 studied the history of their community in Cleveland and discovered a 19th century world centre of technology and industry on their doorstep. The pupils visited the mining sites of the Eston Hills and used digital video to investigate, record and shape their findings. Their writing, displays and the drama-documentary, 'Our Friend Frank' have been presented to parents and partner schools and the CD-Rom 'A Journey in Stone' has been produced.



Investigating history with the tools of today.

As Mick Young, Project Development, Northern Grid for Learning, comments; "At Caedmon Primary ICT is embedded in children's lives and they use it on a daily basis, not just in the form of computers but increasingly embedded into all types of technical devices and increasingly as a necessary part of all manner of social and economic transactions. ICT is being used to support a complex, multi-threaded learning process rather than to deliver a particular ICT skill or add a touch of techno gloss."

Northern Grid for Learning has worked closely with the team at Caedmon Primary since the school opened in 2003. Caedmon will be taking part in Northern Grid's forthcoming Videoconferencing in the Curriculum project and the RBC will continue to offer advice, support and services which enable ground-breaking schools such as Caedmon to realise their vision for raising whole-school standards.