

Literacy – Week beginning 1st June 2020

We were due to have INSET days this coming Friday and the following Monday, so you have a nice long weekend! Here is an outline for this week's literacy. I've also put some more SPaG activities on the website too which will be one of the literacy sessions. As always, please don't feel bad if you can't get everything done. If you need anything extra, please let me know.

The book 'The Odyssey' by Robin Lister is available to buy on Amazon or you can 'borrow' it for two weeks by following this link:

<https://archive.org/details/odyssey0000list>

Before we start, please read together the story of the Trojan War (or there are versions on YouTube). This isn't really necessary, as The Odyssey is such a great story in own right. However, a brief chat about the Trojan War could be quite fruitful, as lots of children know about it already and it puts The Odyssey in a bit of context. Knowing that Odysseus hatched the plan with the wooden horse and led the Greek soldiers who were inside it gives a good introduction to him as a character too. The class also benefit from knowing something about the Greek gods, but again this isn't really necessary. This is one reason why this is such a good text to study during part of an Ancient Greece project.

Introduce the story, briefly describing the themes and some of the content. This is a tale of adventure, excitement and drama full of vengeful gods, terrifying monsters and epic battles. Then read to them (or get them to read) the start of The Odyssey from Odysseus landing on Phaecia until he begins to tell his story. You don't need to go into too much detail here, just that we are listening to Odysseus tell his own story. This is great for setting up the first person narrative the children will write later. Also, don't worry about getting the pronunciations right or remembering the name of everything. It's the story that matters.

Have a discussion about who Odysseus is and what we know about him so far?

Read the battle with the Cyclopes and the crew's visit to the land of the lotus eaters. Discuss what has happened.

Activity 1

Keep notes for a story log that is to be completed over the course of the entire story. Record what happens in each adventure, building to a picture of the whole story that will help your child plan their own writing. This can be recorded however you like: we do a lot of story maps in class which are always good. This doesn't need to be rushed!

Read the story as they land on a new island, finding plenty to eat. Odysseus and some men go off to explore and find a cave. Finish as they enter the cave and hear footsteps coming. It's good to end on a cliffhanger!

Next, read the story of Polyphemus the Cyclops right up until Odysseus escapes.

Activity 2

We would have done a drama activity here in groups which I appreciate is not really possible at the moment. Therefore, perhaps the children could produce freeze frames using Lego, toys, paintings, playdough, whatever they like! They need to produce three freeze frame images that tell this story (can't wait to see Cyclops!). If you can send them to me, that would be great. Please take photos of them and, if possible, put them in the home learning books. I appreciate this may take some time but it really doesn't matter – it's all about becoming familiar with (and enjoying) the story.

When this is finished, discuss what this story tells us about Odysseus. He is clever, brave, cunning, quick-thinking, worried about his crew, a natural leader etc. He's got all the usual hero traits, but he's also a bit vain and over-confident. Is there any need to tell Polyphemus his name?

Activity 3

Finally, children need to write up their story logs please.