

ARTWORKSHOPS AT THE 2007 GLENURQUHART STORYTELLING PROJECT

I have been visiting the glenurquhart nursery and the Bridgit Venture special needs project together with the storyteller Bob Pegg. My role has been to enhance the childrens activities with Bob and the stories he has been working on, and creating artwork with them for the storytelling event in the Glenurquhart village hall, which will be for all the groups that took part in the project.

The nursery

Two groups have been working with Bob to dramatise their stories into a presentation for the parents to see. Each group was made up of 12-18 children, depending on the day. The younger children have developed a story about the gingerbread man, who eventually gets eaten by the Loch ness monster. I have led workshops to help them create gingerbread puppets, which they can use at the performance and take home later. We used card and collage materials of pasta, buttons and polomints to crate faces and buttons for our puppets. We have also worked on a large cardboard castle, which acts as a the main prop for the story, and sets the scene for the drama. The other, slightly older group has been dramatising their version of the three little pigs. Their art sessions involved creating the houses of straw, sticks and bricks which the little piggies make. I planned the activities to be something that they could complete in a half day session, so we made one of the houses on each of my visits. Both groups of children were interested in the activities and were aware that their work would be part of the storytelling presentation.

The Bridgit Venture

The Bridgit Venture students and staff developed a long tale about young girls fleeing a dragon who lived in Glenurquhart castle. This was a challenging group to work with as they really wanted each part of the story to be represented visually. We decided on a long picture similar to the Bayeaux tapestry, which would follow the story as it unfolded. I worked with the group to draw the characters and features of the landscape of the story, and moved them around on the paper roll until we had created a scene that corresponded to the story. We would then paint this scene as we discussed with Bob what might happen next. The group were delighted to see their cut out drawings becoming part of the 'tapestry', and we continued for two consecutive days until we had told the whole story. The staff and students both found this activity rewarding and were impressed by the work they had created.

Geordie Haig