



HAY CASTLE TRUST

Powys Arwain/Leader



This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.

Cyllidwyd y prosiect hwn drwy Cymunedau Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru - Rhaglen Datblygu Gwledig Cymru 2014-2020, a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru a'r Gronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig.

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Introduction – Making History Digital

The Making History Digital pilot project was conceived as an opportunity to incorporate the goals of the LEADER Digital project with the aims of the learning programme at Hay Castle. The project was also planned to tie in with the four core purposes of the New Welsh Curriculum which centre around:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

During initial discussions with Hay Castle Trust, Arwain and headteachers in the Gwernyfed cluster it was agreed that it would be beneficial for local school pupils to utilize upcoming technology alongside learning about the history of their communities. At first it was thought that this would be done by teaching the pupils to use digital cameras and equipment to make short documentary films in which they would interview members of their community and talk about their stories associated with local history and the landscape around them. This project would use the equipment already available at the five new primary schools in the Gwernyfed cluster as well as bringing in some extra equipment such as microphones, tripods and editing software. This would then tie in with interpretation planned at Hay Castle and a film made by professionals at Rural Media.

Pilot 1 in Hay Primary School

The project was started in January 2019 with pupils in year 5 & 6 in Hay Primary which sits just below Hay Castle. After a brief history of the area and the notions of myths and legends and how they build into our understanding of history the pupils were introduced to the equipment and given training in documentary film making before they began to plan their interviews.

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It soon became apparent that this plan would prove very difficult with a class of 30+ pupils as it was impossible to coordinate without more staff and workshop leaders trained in interview technique and filming. Groups could not easily be left to work alone, and the equipment was difficult to get right.

It was decided that the project needed to be adapted and instead that the pupils could use the school iPads to film stop motion animations of their chosen local history stories.

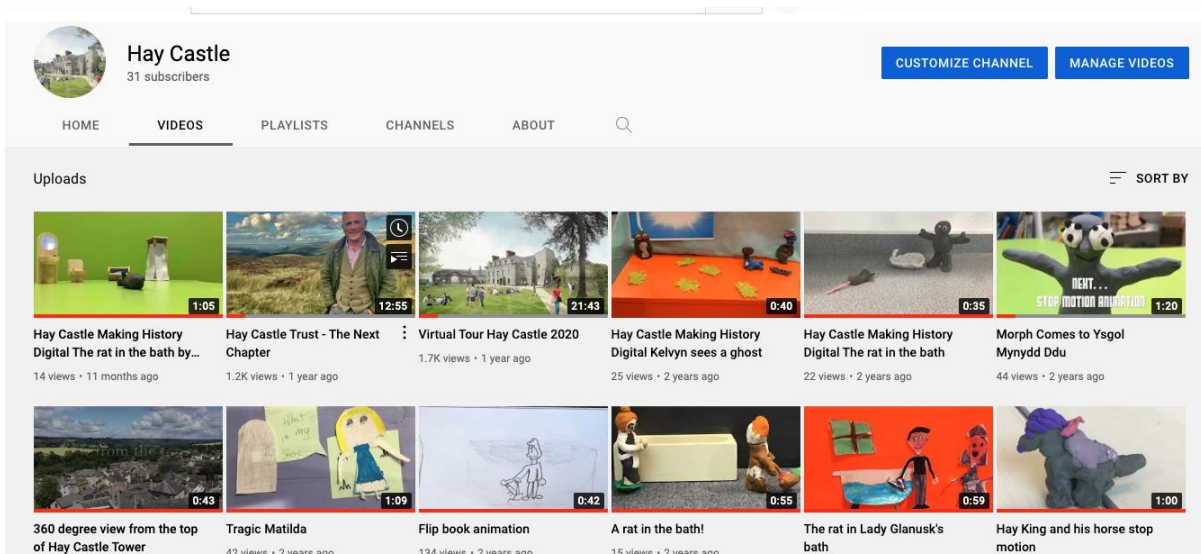
This was a far more successful format as it worked following the following format:

1. Pupils learn about local history using storytelling
2. Pupils are introduced to the heritage of animation as a form of film making using YouTube. Simple photographic techniques are also introduced and a brief history of photography as a technology.
3. Pupils experiment with different techniques such as flipbooks, magic strings and zoetrope as well as making models of Morph and other Aardman characters
4. Pupils chose their favourite story and learnt about storyboard creation using teaching aids developed by Aardman animation and INTO Film Cymru
5. Pupils create storyboards and practice initial ideas filmed with iPads
6. Pupils film stop motion animation using plasticine, toys or paper cut-outs
7. Pupils edit stop motion animation using free software on iPads
8. Final films are uploaded to Hay Castle YouTube page

The workshops would still be achieving the goals of teaching digital skills whilst also learning about local history and fitting in with the core principles of the New Welsh Curriculum. Resources were used from Aardman, INTO Film and Wales in Film to help support the workshops. The pupils also entered a competition run by INTO Film which tied in with the themes being explored.

During the Hay Primary School workshops 43 pupils learnt about filming using iPads, they edited using software and uploaded their final films to the Hay Castle channel. In order to do this they had to overcome obstacles presented by the need to share data across multiple platforms, record sound and download soundtracks to edit with the visuals they had created and also worked as teams to create each piece.

The films are edited to include the Arwain/Leader logos during the credits at the end and are available on the Hay Castle YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyopiIPYIs9fo2c3TkwXMBg>



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From an evaluation standpoint it was important that the project was adapted at this early stage as it was evident quite quickly that the initial idea would not work. What remained were the goals of introducing the skills required in film making, understanding the history of both the local area and film/animation, planning and story boarding, creative making of models, editing and final production.

Pilot 2 in Clyro Primary School

Following the first pilot with pupils in year 5 & 6 in Hay School the project was discussed with the heads at the Gwernyfed Cluster Heads meeting and Clyro School suggested that they would like to incorporate the project into their educational planning in July 2019. The teachers at Clyro decided that they would prefer the workshops to take place with class 2 which is formed of Year 1& 2 pupils. The same format was followed as previously with the information adapted slightly for these younger pupils. It was also decided that the pupils would experiment with using green screen technology to film with the iPads as well as stop motion animation.



Making digital films with these younger pupils proved more challenging as their skill levels and concentration were different, however they were incredibly quick to pick up the techniques and adapt what they learnt to their own creative productions. They were very adept at using the green screen and downloaded their own software and images in order to adapt this to the stories that they wanted to tell. They also enjoyed the ability to use the outdoor spaces at school to bring their learning outside. The Clyro workshops engaged with 23 pupils.

Pilot 3 Ysgol Mynydd Du

Following further discussions with the Gwernyfed Cluster Heads Ysgol Mynydd Du in Talgarth requested the workshops for their Year 5 & 6 pupils in December 2019 and January 2020. Being back with year 6 meant that the previous worksheets and training used with Hay school could be used including adaptations added through evaluation and learning along the way. These workshops included resources created by INTO Film which looked particularly at legends and Wales.

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Visit Wales promotional film



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Wales on Film: Film Legends of Wales

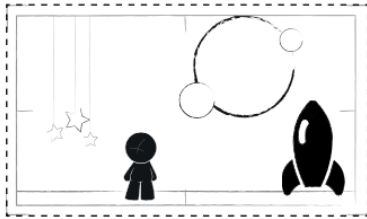
Introduction

The class at YMD is a large class of 34 but the workshops worked well using the spaces created by “The Street” area in these new schools. The pupils were hugely enthusiastic about the days when they were doing animation and learning about the digital skills required. The pupils were very keen on the photography element and resources were brought into the school including box brownie cameras and an old Bolex movie camera for them to handle and explore. The techniques behind good framing and the theory involved in various forms of movie set ups were discussed using the language of films – i.e. wide shot, close-up, mid shot. An advert for Visit Wales was used to analyse the film making and the techniques used.

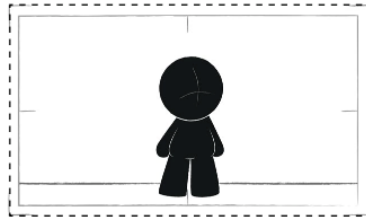
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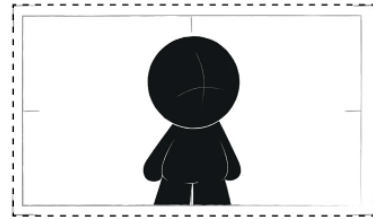
Camera shot sort sheet



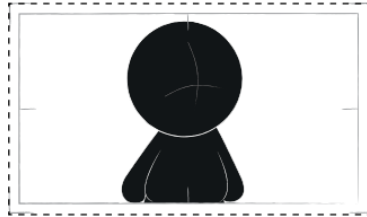
Wide shot



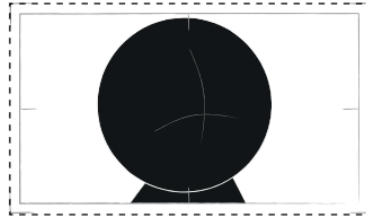
Long shot



Medium long shot



Mid shot



Close up



Extreme close up

Evaluation

Having completed workshops with three different schools the resources had been developed and refined making them easier to reproduce and use in further schools and with different ages. Using stop motion animation would work well with older high school pupils and could be used during adult film making classes.

- A total of 100 pupils were engaged with the project.
- 30 workshops were held during 2019 and 2020
- Consultation involved six head teachers and four class teachers as well as four teaching assistants.
- Four local community members were involved in the initial interviews at Hay school.
- The project produced over 20 short films.
- Pupils involved have learnt about using digital technology to make films and tell stories about their local area.
- Teachers have been introduced to concepts of film making and digital animation to use themselves in other classes.
- Hay Castle Trust has worked to develop relationships with the Gwernyfed cluster of schools.
- Hay Castle Trust now has a library of resources which have been tested and piloted with primary school pupils.

Also important is the notion that an understanding of the history of film and photography links well with exploring the heritage of a local area. Equally it is hugely beneficial in growing a sense of community and in forging links with local heritage and consequently increasing wellbeing through a sense of belonging. With some pupils where there

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was some reluctance to make films about history the pupils chose to focus instead upon their stories as children of farmers. They instead made animation that included tractors and vehicles. These outputs may not quite reach the goals of Hay Castle Trust but it was felt to be important that they felt happy and inspired in what they decided to make films about and that if they were thinking about their place within the local landscape then this was equally viable. The New Welsh Curriculum places great importance upon pupils gaining an understanding of their place within Wales and how that fits in with the history of Wales. Building creative outputs and exploring heritage was important in the conception of the project and has proved a valuable and beneficial core purpose for the work.

Legacy of Making History Digital

We hope that this project will be able to be revisited once the current Covid restrictions are relaxed. Feedback from the pupils and schools was overwhelmingly positive, and this was a textbook example of how to engage pupils in a subject matter that might be perceived as boring in a fresh and imaginative way. The written feedback from pupils speaks for itself.

Thanks to the LEADER project we will be able to run more Making History Digital sessions on site at the Castle once we open, engaging with more children and adults. We will have iPads and model making equipment as part of the Clore Learning Space and will also encourage participants to engage with the whole of the estate, such as the grounds, Honesty Bookshop, scheduled ancient monument, and the tower.

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