



Words in the Woods Project

Stories from

St Brides Major Church in Wales Primary School

St Bride's Church in Wales Primary School

My name is Claire Phillips; I am the reception class teacher in St. Brides Major Church in Wales Primary School where I have felt extremely privileged to have been a part of the Words in the Woods project, as it has not only been an enriching and valuable experience for the children in my class, but also for me as a Primary School Teacher.

About four years ago I carried out research in a Vale of Glamorgan Primary School year five class, which focused on creative writing, the resultant paper concluded that when children painted a picture of a story prior to writing it, the quality of their descriptive writing was greatly improved.

Having observed my reception class children telling their own stories (which were linked to their forest experiences) I can conclude that they also were more descriptive when telling their stories than they ordinarily would have been without the forest experience. The Words in the Woods project has let them experience 'being in the picture' if you like.

By receiving this first hand experience, the children were able to walk out their stories and in fact live in them for a short while, before actually being aware of it. For me it was a more natural process which evolved for the children rather than being forced. The forest experience evoked the children's imaginations and their senses, therefore all types of learners were touched by the experience.

Besides all this, the children had the most magical time and I am sure that they will have fantastic lifetime memories from this experience, as will I.

At St. Brides we are very fortunate to have wonderful school grounds which could be as enriching as the forest if utilised within creative writing lessons. As a result of my forest experience, I will be encouraging all members of staff to take their children into the outdoors when taking part in creative writing.

**Claire Phillips
Reception Class Teacher**

Kieran



Once upon a time I went to the swamp and I saw a tree and an umbrella.

I saw a cave and there was nothing in it. I think I saw something move in the water. It was a water beacon – a thing that moves in the water so fast that you can't catch it.

I saw Jack in a tree and he was snoring because he was sleeping 'cos he had a busy day. And he was sailing the boat called Friday and Friday went to Mexico. He went in the swimming pool and he sailed his boat again.

I saw Hannah. She was doing the tune. She was walking. She made a magic potion with feathers, with coconuts ... not coconuts – acorns! If you took the magic potion you could go zooming, zooming across the water.

Hannah put the pencils there to travel, to travel to a secret place.

Isaac



Once upon a time in the forest we saw pencils – they were Hannah's – and ribbons – pink and blue and some were white.

We saw Hannah in a dark forest. She was tying ribbons around the trees because she wanted to make the forest magic. She made soup and I made soup. We put loads of vegetables in our soup. We put onions in and boiling water to make some soup, but we didn't eat it. I'm sure we did eat soup but not the forest soup. And she played her recorder with her fingers.

Jack was in the tree, sleeping and he was looking for an owl and you were wearing glasses. We ate some apples when we saw you, nice apples. Then you were playing guitar and Hannah was playing her recorder.

And we saw a pond - an umbrella. And Jack had a boat hidden – Friday. Friday went to a magical land in South Africa. It's very cold and windy. It snows all day and you have to stay inside all day so you have to play inside all day.

Jack



One day in the forest, we saw pencils – a red one, a yellow one and we almost spotted a green one in the forest. I think it was the last tree we spotted. And we found ribbons – the fairy's. And she was tying the trees up with ribbon and pencils so she could see some people.

We followed a trail and we found a little gap and I said, "I found somewhere" and we checked and we found some lamps and feathers and coconuts and then we found the fairy. She was making soup, probably spaghetti soup ... with coconuts and then had feathers and she put glitter on it.

If you taste magic soup you could become invisible and you could take people's stuff, go and be a ghost and fight people.

And we saw Jack up in a tree. You were snoring with your glasses on, then you jumped down in the bucket and then you saw an owl in the tree – you – in the night. In the forest, Isaac spotted you. In the morning, we sat down with some apple, then we ate.

We sing her song and we came to the river and then you sailed your boat called Saturday ... I can remember it – Saturday! Then you played the song again.



*Sail away boat
Sail away Saturday
'Cos you found her on Saturday.*

And the fairy warned you there was crocodiles in the water. Not in the water ... in the cave! And you get the fairy's umbrella and it was dirty and you made it dirty again.

Tom



Once upon a time, there were lots of trees with little squirrels looking for nuts and they hop from tree to tree.

We saw a pond. There was a boat on the pond. There was a man who sailed the boat.

Which man was it? I don't know! ... I think it was, I think it was you, because you have the same clothes on.

I saw a fairy, in a tent, tying ribbons.

She made soup, magic soup, because it had magic dust on it and you could go really fast (fast as a cheetah) and you could fly up in the trees and find leaves for the soup. And you could be vanished, creep around when you're invisible.

We saw a man who sailed the boat and he was up in the tree – sleeping. That was his home – he lived there. We say "Bore da" because he was tired, because he stayed up all night watching night-time creatures, like owls. He saw an owl, fox, Gruffalo (he lives in a cave – he looks for food – mouses!)

And then we came home on the bus.

Hannah



Once upon a time there was a fairy and a bird (an owl) and the bird looked out of the tree. It was big (the owl) and there was a man who lived in a tree. He was sleeping because he was tired and hungry. All night long he'd been looking out of the tree for animals. He saw owl. Owl said, "Hello". He said, "Hello. What's your name?". Owl said, "Ben".

Jack saw giraffes along the museum. They had lots of leaves and took a long time until they got to the place ... to the forest. They saw more leaves.

And then the fairy flew. We saw her in the forest. Her house was some sticks holding the blanket up and there was some soup in the big brown pot – with sticks too. The soup was tomato soup and it was ready for *tomorrow. Feathers and pine cones and feathers and pine cones ... and magic dust.*

If you drank soup with magic fairy dust, things would happen to you ... lots of sparkly stuff. Glitter – really sparkling blue. If I drank magic soup, I could fly. I would fly to outer space. I would see aliens – all sticky and squidgy.

Tuesday got wet and the fairy put her on the washing-line. She got wet on Tuesday in the swimming pool. That's when I go swimming. She got wet in the pond. It was muddy and there were sharks and it nearly bit the fairy but she just got away in time.

She said to the man who was playing the guitar her boat was an umbrella. And the man said, "That's an umbrella and this is a real boat". The man stayed and played with his boat and the lady went home to check on her soup for tomorrow.

And then all the children went home on the bus.

Taylor



We saw Hannah and we saw Jack hanging up in a tree. He was asleep because it was his house. He was asleep for a long time. He'd been awake all night because he saw an owl in the air. Owls eat worms.

He ate apple from Hannah's basket. Who else ate it from Hannah's basket? Us! Me!! It was magic apple and when they eat it they turn into a frog. You'd go "ribbit, ribbit" and go in a pond.

We saw an umbrella – it was pink and it was Hannah's and it was muddy and it was a yucky pond. And Jack he held her watering can and poured water on the umbrella to make it clean. She cleaned her wellies too.

There were crocodiles in the cave and it was dark. They still in the cave and Jack putted his boat in the water – Thursday ... no, Friday!! Friday sailed away to a magic land with magic ponies. They had a horn and they were pink.

We saw a teddy hanging. We saw some soup – magic soup – pine cones and feathers and fairy dust. If you drink magic soup you might turn into a magic pony and be pink. I'd be a pink pony called Taylor.

William



Once upon a time I saw a teddy bear hanging on a peg. Then I saw a teddy bear by the bows – Teddy Tuesday – she belonged to the fairy.

We saw the bows on a bit of rope by where the fairy lived. And the pens where they lead. The pens were hanging on the bows on the trees – they were leading where the pencils were. The pencils point where you should go to find the bows. And when there were no more bows, we got there.

There was a net with a bow on it, where the umbrella is. It was a lake. An umbrella was with a bow attached to it. Jack said, "The boat can sail in the muddy lake". In the magic faraway land there would be pens for Hannah and Hannah will took the pens off the bows and will write on the trees. She will write an X where Hannah was living.

Luke



[Luke talking about his treasure map.] That's Sam. That's me ... and Matthew guards a bad pirate with his boot. And those are the aliens – not that carrot sticker! But me and Sam climbed up the ladder and destroyed the alien. These numbers say how close we were. And me and Sam found the treasure and took it back to our secret hideout. The boat sailed to The Land of the Sea – Tortuga. It was a real life pirates' land.

The end.

... Well, there's one more thing ... at Tortuga, there was a famous pirate Anne Bonnie and Blackbeard and Anne's dad, Shanti, and little boys called Max, Alex and Califax and they go back to pirate times. I don't know what it's called but I do know the pirate song on the tape. When I'm a bit older I might be able to sing it.

At the forest, we made smelly potions – they were all very stinky. I put some leaves, some dandelions – we put some grass in and dead brown leaves. We played that peppermint game and Sheena had to rub a bit of cotton wool on the trees and we had to use our noses to smell the trees and whoever would smell the tree would be the winner.

Sam

Once upon a time, I liked the smelly potion. The one sleeping in the tree, Jack. And his welly fell out. The welly fell on my head.

I liked picking up the feathers. We put them in a bag and gave them to the lady. She put them in the pot. Soup, feathers and pine cones. I liked the bit where we put the pine cones in the pot.

I liked the bit when we saw the pencils. They were real pencils – big-sized. It was a magic pencil and, when we just write it, it was there and when we turned it over and just wiped it and it wasn't there.

The lady tied the ribbons onto the pencils.

I liked the bit where we saw the caterpillars.





Matthew

I saw Jack in the tree. Jack had a boat. It was behind the crocodiles. I saw one of their tails. They nearly ate Jack. He climbed out of their mouths.

He jumped down from his tree. He went to the fairy's house. He ate all the soup. The fairy went to her house and looked in the pot and saw there wasn't any left. She put some magic dust in there but it didn't work. She caught up with Jack and she shouted at him 'cos he had eaten all the soup.



Amelie

Once upon a time, there were some children in a forest. They went on a school trip because they wanted to see Jack and Sarah and Hannah.

They were happy because they liked Hannah and Jack and Sarah.

When they got to the forest they missed Hannah and Jack and Sarah because they didn't see them again.

They helped the forest. They looked after the animals in the forest. Hannah was kind and Jack was funny, maybe that bit should be at the end; and Sarah was kind and helpful.

I think they didn't work there anymore, they might of changed their mind now about not working in the forest.



Amelie

Once upon a time there was a forest and a class from St Brides.

And there was Jack sleeping in a tree. Hannah called him to come down and we all went wandering off again with Jack to the pond. We saw mud, squelchy mud and Hannah said to get her umbrella. I saw a boat called Friday.

Once upon a time there was a Hannah who was a fairy – she's pretty, she's kind, she had green spotty wings.

She lives in the forest. She looks after the forest 'cos she works there. She does stuff in the forest. Jack lives in the forest. He helps Hannah to look after the forest.

Uma



I got the magic pencil.

I remember – I like frogs.

We tied the ribbons on the trees. We hung the pencil on the trees. Magic. The magic pencil with it hanging. Hang it on the tree. We find it.

The teddy called Wednesday ... no, Tuesday! She was in the boat. She was walking, walking, walking. And she go and she got a mummy bear. The little bear ... it's all empty! Somebody's sitting on my seat and they've broke it. Ahhhh. Somebody sleep in my bed. And she run out the gate.

We found feathers on the floor. You get it in the basket.

Magic glitter – makes me a butterfly. I would fly.

Snake. Sssssssssss. They live in the zoo. Snake was in a zoo and it escaped.

A story ... it's another story ... a pretend one.

Teddy was walking with his dad and mum and he was climbing in the car and he make a tent in the forest and it was night time and it's time for sleeping. And it's morning time to go home. Walking, walking, walking. The end.

The monkey want to go home. The end.

Sinead



We went in the forest and we saw ribbons and we saw pencils – big pencils. We went and we saw one pink ribbon and then we went all and all and saw another ribbon and it was blue. And when we went all along we saw another pink ribbon and we saw another blue ribbon.

And then we saw a muddy pond, an umbrella, and watering can – flowers – and I saw a tail wibbling, a crocodile's tail. It was tiny. It actually was a baby crocodile and it was really really tiny.

Then we went and we went and we went and we went until we saw a ribbon. Sarah went in the forest, in the shade, and then we went in and we saw Hannah. She had a line and then when after she went snap, snap, snap. She had a clip that went snap.

We saw a line. We saw some ribbons and a teddy, Tuesday.

Me and Mrs Wetley went and we saw a man and he was going [she made a snoring sound effect]. He was sleeping and then we went and went "Bore da" and then he waked.

We went and Hannah and he had a tune "La la la la la la la la".

Sarah had an apple. She put it under the pencil.

We waked the bus driver up. I went "WAKE UP!" and then we all leaved and we knocked on the window. And then we went on the bus and then we kepted on waving and then we're back at school. And then we went all the way back and we saw all the ribbons.

We played marbles inside.

We put acorns in the soup. We picked some feathers and we found some pine cones.

Florence



Once upon a time there was a girl called Florence who had some magic crystals [Miss Phillips' necklace]. I turned them into a frog – a green frog. It jumped around.

I saw some pencils in the forest – on the trees. They were Hannah's pencils. She hanged them on the trees. Fat pencils.

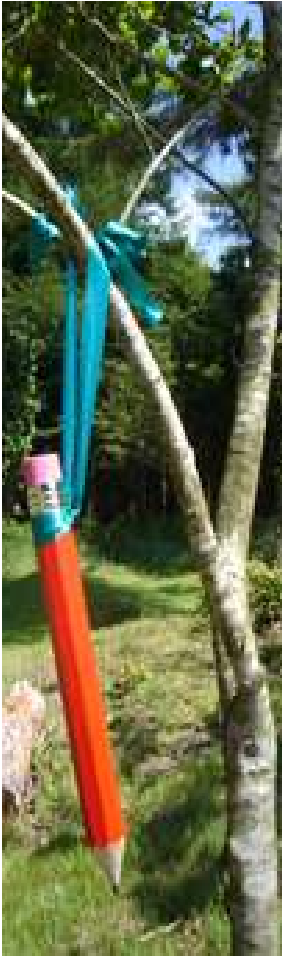
My favourite bit was when you [Hannah] made magic soup. You put feathers and acorns in the soup. If you ate the soup, you might turn into a frog. Tuesday was hanged on the washing line. You put magic dust in the soup.

I would dress up as a fairy. I would have some wings and a dress and a wand and some pretty dancing shoes. They would be so sparkly. If I've was a fairy. And I've got a little house I could use as my house.

I saw Jack in the tree. He was sleeping because he was tired. He told us about birds.

We went to the river. Hannah got stuck in the mud. We saw Jack's boat. Friday sailed to an island. It had lots of sand. And Friday might have lived on there.

James



Soup – you made. Pine cones.

Ribbons on the trees and pens. That's a giant pencil. Hannah uses the pencil. That's why her hands are so big and you can draw something.

The fairy house and Jack's tree house. He was sleeping. His boat went down on the ground by the tree and he had a bucket and Hannah put apple in the bucket and he ate it. I ate apple, but I didn't like it. It was magic apple.

A bus would take you to the forest.

There's a fox eating me and Jack might help me, Little Jack.

The bus driver was a monster. He was a Slitheen. I was dreaming at night. At night there was a Slitheen in my bedroom and an Ood and it was Miss Phillips. And then I was punching them, but not Miss Phillips – she was my teacher. I had to leave her. I was punching the Slitheen.

We went to a pond. There was an umbrella and a fishing net and worms and slugs and nice snails and elephants and I saw a little elephant. I sawed it in the pond. I was singing and he was drawing with his pencil, drawing on his hand, drawing in Hannah's house ... and he might colour your soup black ... green as well. A little bit. Green and blue.

Jack had a boat called Tuesday. Put it in the water and boated it and that's it. It sailed to the mud. It was "blublujaaage". And the mud was calling "blublujagye". The mud was to me ... no! Not you! Me!! James. It was saying, "Hey, I'm going to mud on you" and it did. It said, "I'm going to throw an umbrella on you".

The boat got stuck and James and Hannah come to get it. Lions. A lion saved me – James! No ... an elephant. They were fighting.

Emily



One day there was a jellyfish. It was going on somebody's belly and making a mark on there. It was called Sandy. Sandy lived on the rock pools on the sand. Fish lived in the rock pools, different-coloured fish – orange, and one fish was all different colours – it was called Sparkle. It likes to eat seaweed. It tastes all sandy.

The other people were playing on the sand. Hannah and Amelie and Emily were playing ball – you kick it.

The forest was all trees and with stingies.

There was all ribbons, all around the trees. Hannah put the ribbons there – the trees asked her to. I saw a pencil hanging on the little trees – Hannah's pencils – 'cos the trees wanted a pencil 'cos it might want to walk away and draw on the other trees. Trees can walk – to the other trees so they can get more shade. They draw pictures of animals and trees – animals playing. I heard birds, cheeping.

I saw Hannah in the wood, putting ribbons around the trees, cooking soup. Magic soup. If you ate the soup, you would turn into a fairy. If I was a fairy, I would fly everywhere and go to bed when it's morning.

Jack was sleeping up the tree. He had binoculars. He was looking for birds, different kinds of birds.

I ate some apple – it was nice.

The muddy pond – Hannah put her umbrella in there. Jack had his boat. It sailed to the wizard land. Friday stay in the water. They were doing magic, any sorts of magic with their hands and their wands. All the wizards lived there. Nice wizards. They do a pony.