

**Our enquiry question:** ‘Can engaging teachers and pupils with the visual arts offer fresh opportunities for creative approaches to support the development of oracy and literacy in Upper Key Stage 2’. This question was chosen as we have found that pupils' oracy ability had diminished since the Covid years, and we felt this was impacting unfavourably on the writing ability too.

**Link to the School Development Priority:** Develop meaningful opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing across the curriculum.

**What we did:** The 30 pupils studied and analysed different art-work from local Welsh artists. They developed their confidence, perseverance and resilience through a range of drama and oracy sessions along with developing their vocabulary. They transferring their appreciation and knowledge gained from the visual art studies and oracy work into creative writing pieces. Sessions were led in person by our Creative Practitioners: Charlie and online by Lynn.

**When?** Summer 2024. A six-week programme of activities.

**How we did it?** We began our learning based on the 'Gallery' topic of study for the Summer Term. Practitioners were interviewed and suitable candidates chosen. It was decided that 2 Creative Practitioners were to be used. Charlie with an arts background and Lynne a Literacy based practitioner. Sessions were either delivered by Charlie or Lynne (online) or split with a more dynamic collaboration of methodology.

**Who was involved?** 30 children from a mixed ability Year 4/5 class (incorporating one class teacher and one T.A). We employed two creative practitioners (CPs), one that worked in-person and one that worked online. The CPs used a shared document to plan sessions, evaluate workshops and feed forward for upcoming lessons to ensure continuity and coherence.

**Why did we adopt this approach?** We wanted to enable creativity to be at the centre of the Curriculum for Wales, especially the Literacy, Language and Communication Area of Learning and Experiences. We wanted the impact of the project to have a long legacy embedding creative practices into our teaching and learning. We wanted to find ways to enable the creative sides of all staff to impact positively on their teaching and learning through avoiding an increase in staff workload by harnessing and utilising existing school resources, staff and materials. We wanted to see if working with the visual arts would act as a springboard to develop the pupils' oracy and in turn, writing skills.

A key part of my practice as a freelance teacher and Community Arts Teacher is finding new ways to help young people engage with art and creativity. Through meeting with the school staff and Creative Agent we were able to establish an approach to delivering the workshops that would be inclusive and accessible to each pupil and allow them to engage with materials confidently. These approaches included discussions about any additional needs the pupils had, the levels of confidence they had in creative activities and how comfortable they were working in pairs/groups and with children in the class they may not have worked with before.



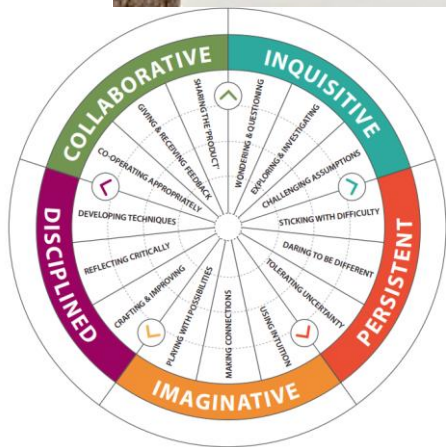
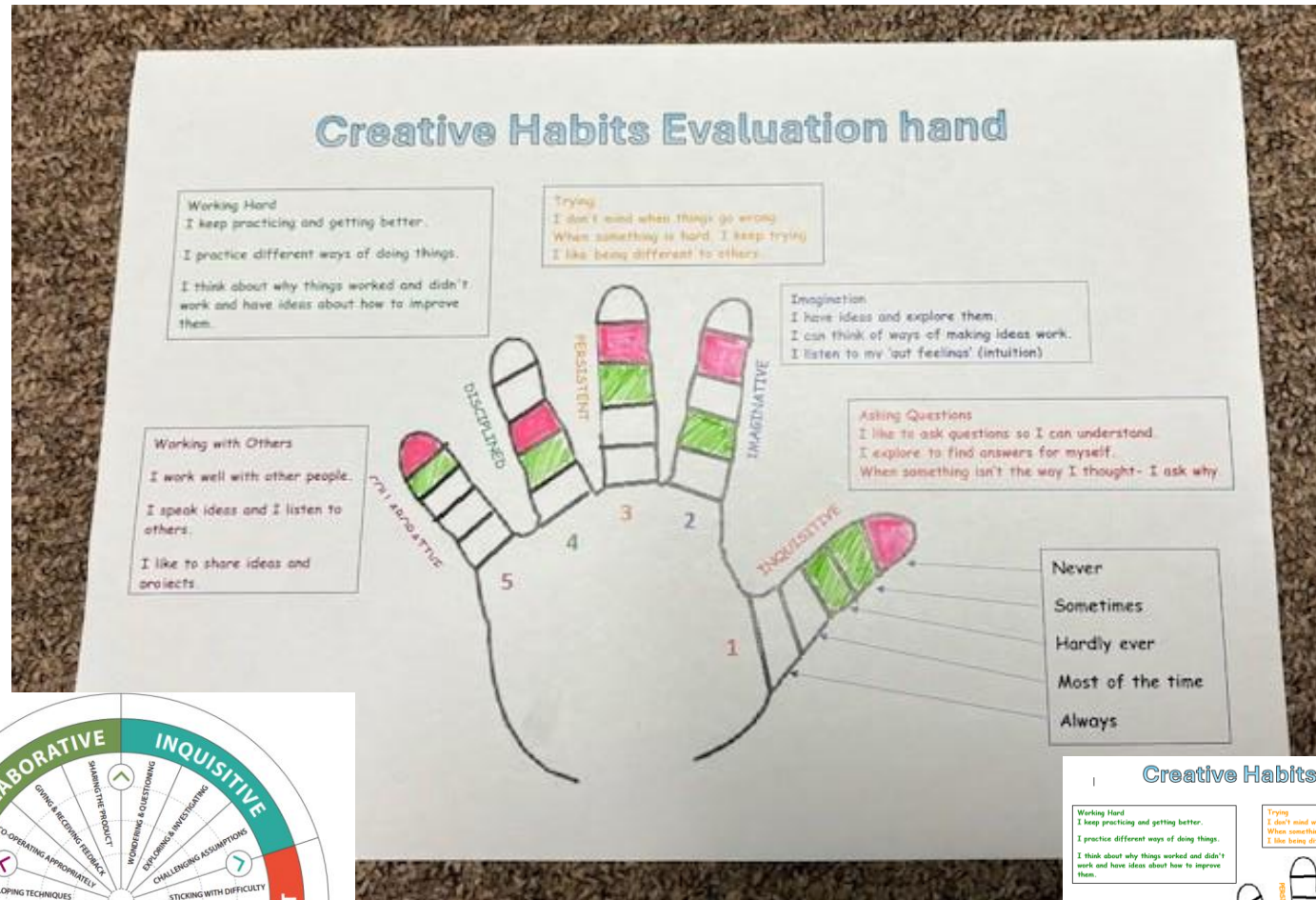
Working with Charlie, the students and staff at St. Padarn's was an absolute joy. I was able to work with a selection of simple yet profound creative writing tools and strategies, dovetailing into the range of arts-based approaches being used by Charlie who was leading this project with this responsive and engaged group of young people. The inspiration went both ways, and the children sparked off my own practice as did the engagement with the class teacher. Working with a fellow creative practitioner was a great way to share professional practice while also exploring new possibilities and connections.



## An Example of a Creative Habits Evaluation Hand

**Positive growth:** This shows that there was an increase in all areas of the creative mind but especially in the area of imagination. This project offered many opportunities to reflect on the visual arts and offer their own interpretations which can so easily fire imagination.

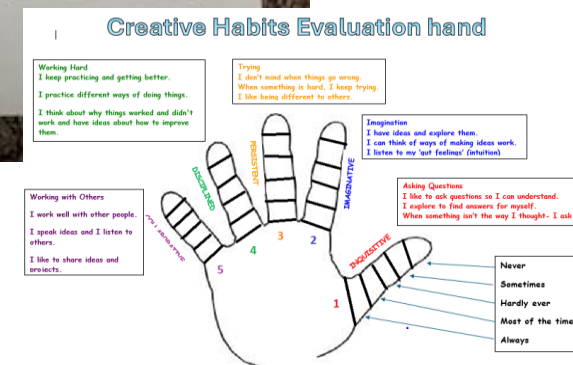
**Area of difficulty:** Initially, the pupils struggled to collaborate out of their friendship groups but as the project developed, they became better at this aspect. This child indicated that working with others was the lowest scoring on the evaluation sheet.



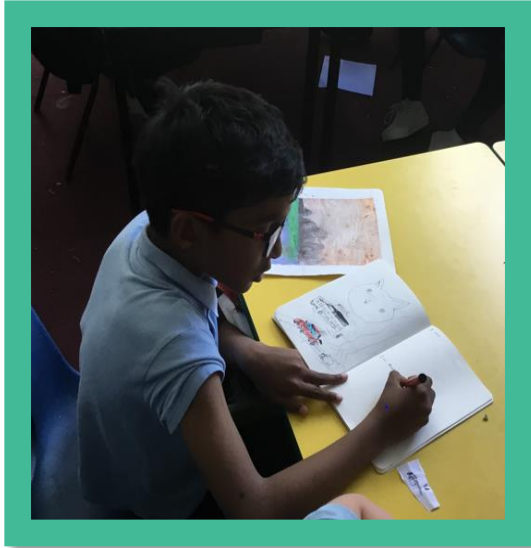
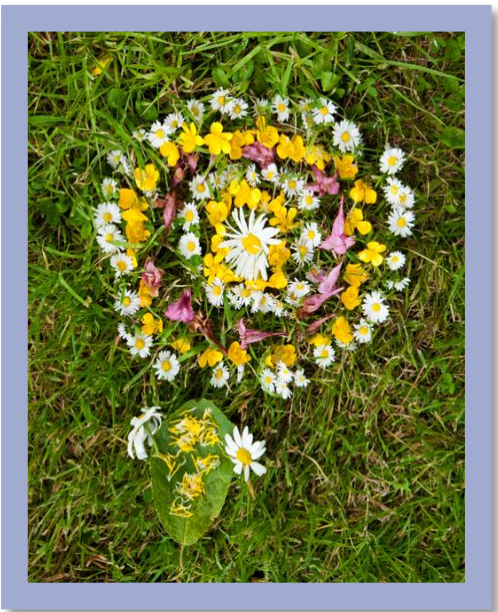
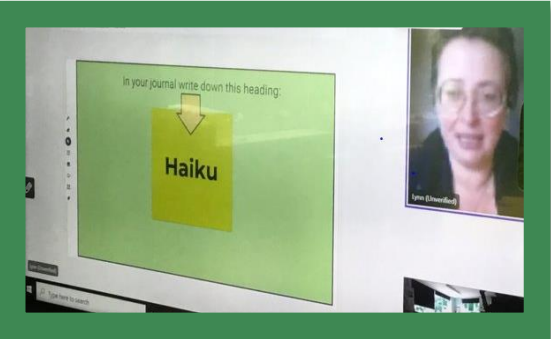
**Key**

**Starting Point – marked in red**

**End point – marked in green**







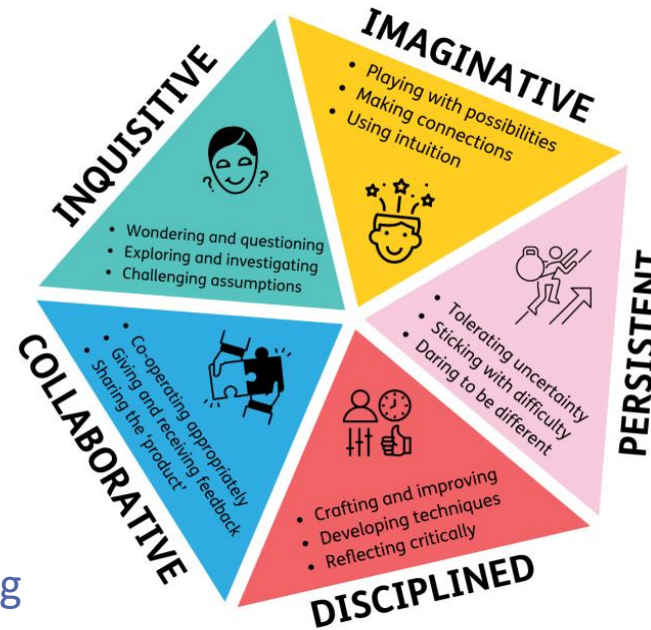
ROTHKO	SOUND SCAPES	STOP MOTION	STORY BOARDING	STORY WRITING	SOUND FOLEY	PRIVATE FRED WRITE
JOURNALS	VISIT TO ARTS CENTRE	LAND ART	TEULU EXHIBIT	HAIKUS	BISCOFF SANDWICH POEM	VOCAL EXERCISES
LIST POEMS	JACK DAN ACTIVE LISTEN	RECORDING OURSELVES	BRINGING IN PHOTOS	INK PRINTING	BEAT-BOXING	LOOKING AT ART
PING PONG	MINDFUL THINKING	SPEED DRAWING	INTERVIEW	FULL VALUE CONTRACT	ZOOM IN / ZOOM OUT	PAINTING HAIKUS
What did I learn?	What did I think?	Would I do it again?	Was it fun?	Was it challenging?	My favourite thing was...	EVALUATION



*Creative Activities covered in the project*

- Challenging assumptions: Looking at art and discussing ("Teulu", examining each other's artwork, zoom in/zoom out)
- Exploring and Investigating: Being resourceful (Land Art)
- Questioning: Bringing in objects that mean something special and talking about/looking at them.

## Opportunities for the Development of the Creative Habits of the Mind



- Making connections: Creative writing (storyboard), stop motion animation, imagining soundscapes
- Playing with possibilities: Acrostic poems, haikus, story writing
- Using intuition: Abstract painting/ Ink Printing
- Using language imaginatively (synonyms, creativity)

- Using patience and persistence in animation
- Finding courage to speak and perform in front of others.
- Refining and evaluating their work as the project moves along.

- Collaboration: Animating in teams, Jackdaw poem reading and Biscoff Sandwich Poem
- Giving and Receiving feedback: Interviewing each other and Visit to Arts Centre
- Sharing the product: Reciting poems/haikus together and Beatboxing with Cats

- Listening to instructions and classroom etiquette (Full Value Contract)
- Reflecting critically: Private Free Write
- Crafting and improving: Recording speech/poems

I learnt new words and saw new art works.

There was poems and there was lots of new words from the art

I learnt new words and used them when I was writing in my diary that Charley gave to us, and it helped me to write down my thoughts.

Comments from responses to watercolours 'What can you see?'

Beach  
Sunset  
Volcano  
Trees  
Doodles  
Waves  
Galaxy  
Temple ruins  
Mountains - peaceful  
Happy  
Lonely river, sad  
Texture and movement  
Mudslide, waves within waves  
Two waves meeting,  
Big splash, humungous  
Colourful (mood)  
Rivers rain rivers  
A Day on the Beach  
Northern lights - Aurora Borealis  
Possibilities  
(ooh!) aerial, clouds, flying, coastline.  
The Weird Eye  
The Milky Way ('Me too!')  
Scenery  
See different things when you look at different times (thank you Mr Evans!)  
Thirsty. Lolli-poppish  
Ships on the ocean  
Path  
A colourful wall with a cat's tail  
Shape and movement and a wing  
Joy  
The Ukrainian flag

Interesting to note that through the class discussion, students were able to deepen their responses and start to see on a deeper level, beyond the surface. Descriptions creep in that evoke a shared emotion, along with words describing movement and texture.

Titles to pieces started to creep in

It gave me confidence

I started to use more imaginative words

## Learner Impact

***Pupil Voice: How do you think the creative activities helped your oracy to improve?***



I liked the very calming way to start a calm free write.

I think I improved my writing in my journal and writing poems.

By learning bigger words

It did improve because I actually had more to write about. I also learnt about new trees like the Rowan tree.

**Had a sense of deepening responses today, reflecting on ink prints made yesterday. Students starting to make more creative connections and not just say what they could see on the surface level** (dragons / fire / angel wings / snowflakes falling / happy and excited / calm / peaceful / extraordinary / vibrant and energised / river in the forest / like a palm leaf / different shades of red / the rough sea/ two pickaxes on green leaves / blue lungs / a face with the leaves / a surfboard leaves blowing everywhere / water splashing everywhere / a tree made of water /a bridge about to fall down)

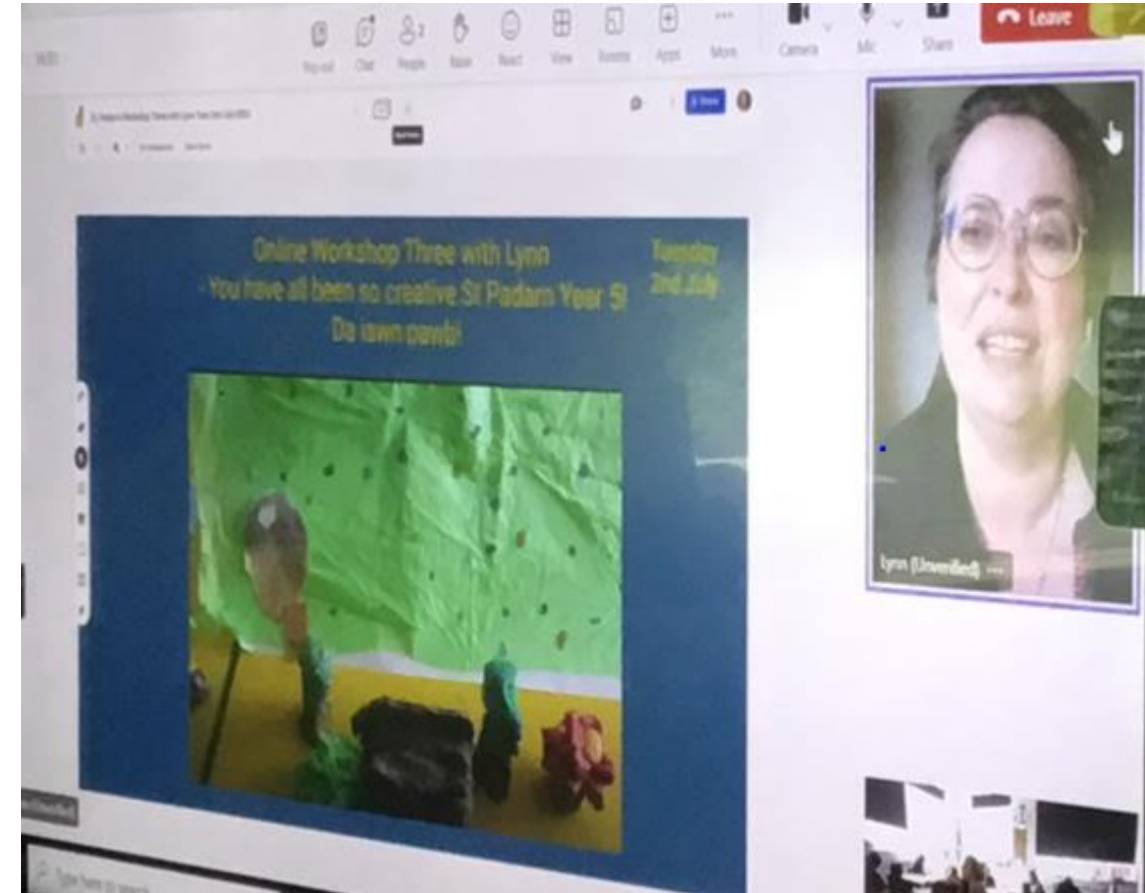
Yes, I improved my writing from creating the haiku

### ***Learner Impact***

***Pupil Voice: How did taking part in the project help you to become a better writer?***



- Working with Lynn over Teams presented some challenges, both practical and technical; the room could sometimes be a confined space and visibility of the classroom for Lynn would sometimes be a challenge. We worked through this by having a teacher, TA or Charlie available on days when Lynn would be delivering classes to ensure the pupils were engaging effectively. Wider camera access could have improved on these issues.
- Some of the pupils were very attached to their friendship groups, and a part of the learning process was engaging with other learners with whom they may not have worked with before to encourage resilience and team building. There were some occasions where a pupil would refuse to engage in an activity if their best friend were not in the same group, but we continued to build on their resilience over time and this slowly improved, with pupils feeling more at ease in different groups.





- Some of the pupils had perfectionist tendencies and often fixated on elements of their work that they thought were “imperfect”, this was something that the practitioners and teachers agreed to work on together over the course of the project- to accept mistakes/imperfections. After one of the initial painting workshops, we studied “mistakes” and “imperfections” in their abstract art pieces that they could look at in a new light and learn to appreciate as part of their visual work, and something that enhances the final product.
- The concept of having a notebook was new to the pupils and it took them a while to realise that making 'mistakes' were part of the creative and experimentation process. The pupils' understanding of privacy and their own ownership of the notebook developed over time.

- Pupils were very enthusiastic about the project pitch, particularly use of stop motion animation, and were enthusiastic about having their own project notebook.
- The pupils engaged well with the concept of a private free write, where they spend 5 minutes writing thoughts/observations in their journals. They didn't treat it as a chore, and this was a good way to break up the workday with short bursts of quiet reflection.
- Pupils were all very fast learners and quick to grasp technical aspects of each of the workshops- whether it was how to use the stop motion app on the tablets, understanding how painting techniques work (watercolours, salt sprinkling).





### ***A Nice Surprise!***

The pupils displayed very effective debate/discussion skills, a particular example would be when we took them to visit the Arts Centre, “Teulu” Exhibition and discussed their favourite/least favourite pieces and why (colours/techniques/media). They took interest in walking around the exhibition and studying each piece, making notes in their journals and discussing with each other how a piece of art made them feel.



The class were asked what had surprised them about what they were doing.

#### **Group One**

Words are getting easier [to write]  
Sprinkling salt on paintings  
So good you can do so many backgrounds on an iPad  
When my team gave up and then we came up with a good idea (resilience)  
I was surprised when I made a character with plasticine  
I was surprised when I watched it (the animations with characters)

#### **Group Two**

The landart  
Discovering how to animate the cloud  
How well we worked together  
As a team  
How we made the clay move

One take away line 'I can't think' said one pupil. She was pushed on.  
'Oh, I get it now.'



## ***Team-Work is Dream Work!***

- ***Benefits of a collaborative approach between teachers and creative professionals:*** Fresh new ideas were explored and investigated. At times, the class teacher could observe the activity for short periods to assess pupils' understanding and reflect on the learning, whilst also observing different styles. The collaborative approach enabled both teachers and practitioners to improve their own professional development
- ***Challenges of the collaborative approach:*** Adapting to each teaching style of the different practitioners was a challenge at first, however once everybody was familiar with each other this was soon overcome. Teaching via Teams posed some technical issues (initially sound quality so we had to use an initial microphone that would pick up all the speech for Lynn to hear). Despite these challenges, the children did respond well to the different characters and teaching styles and methods.
- ***Creative solution:*** Pupils adapted well to different teaching methods- Charlie taught in-person and Lynn taught online via Teams. Charlie sometimes used more tactile/practical resources such as clay, paint etc to encourage creative thinking. whereas Lynn's classes were more focused on literacy mindsets using written methods and discussions. The children knew what was expected of them on days when a certain teacher would be in thus the use of two practitioners complimented each other. The Google site was an inspired idea as it kept all our notes in one place and was accessible to all leading the project throughout the set time-period.



**Charlie:** I loved working on this project. Everyone involved approached the project with professionalism, enthusiasm and a passion to make the experience memorable for the pupils and leave a lasting legacy for the school.

I used a wide range of techniques and workshop models that I have used in the five years I have worked as a Community Arts Teacher, and I was really won over by how excited the pupils were to be a part of this project and the work they put into it.

I have lots of new workshop ideas and tools to add to my toolkit as a creative teacher which I'm sure I will use again and again in future projects.

Through the experience I have formed a strong working relationship with St. Padarn's RC School and very much hope I get the chance to work with them again in the future.



**Lynn:** To be a part of this exciting project (children were outdoors, indoors and online) and to see how the children's confidence and enjoyment evolved over the weeks we were together, was an enriching experience. Using a blended learning approach, I would be present digitally, although being able to attend on our celebration day in-person was the icing on the cake.

Well-done to all at St. Padarn's and all power to your collective elbows! A special community nurturing curiosity and creative exploration..

**Mr. Evans:** The project has opened my eyes to a range of teaching methods. I liked the journal and the Private Free Write activity which gave pupils ownership of their own work with no judgement or marking.

I have gained in confidence to try new teaching methods especially using the visual arts and digital media.

Working with Creative Practitioners has been great to share good practice and gauge an insight into the more creative mind, as I come from a more scientific background.

The initial training was an eye-opener, and it was a very positive experience as initially I had reservations based on previous experiences.

I was able to share the project with my colleagues during a staff meeting. Following the discussion the Year 6 teacher explained that she would like to do a stop-motion activity having seen what was demonstrated. The pupils, who had taken part in the project, were skillful and confident applying these animation skills again in their new class.





***We feel the project has had a positive impact in relation to the Delivery of the Curriculum for Wales.***

The pupils were fortunate to experience the provision of a greater variety of teaching methods than can be adopted by the classroom teacher and other teachers within the school.

Use of engaging activities to focus learning and develop the twelve pedagogical principles.

Transferable skills were gained which can be applied to other key areas of learning.

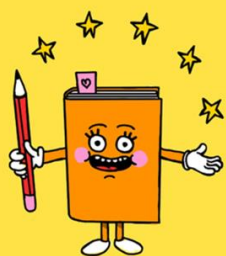
Increased knowledge of art and digital techniques (linked to the Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience and the Digital Competency Framework) through working with Charlie.

St Padarn's gained an enhanced knowledge of language and Literacy pedagogy from working with the Lynn.

Increased networking: Good practice has been shared amongst our school staff. and we aim to share with families and with other schools in our cluster.



Uchelgeisiol a Galluog



Ambitious and Capable

**Ambitious capable learners:** The learners set themselves high standards and enjoyed challenges when they used stop-motion animation. They were questioning and enjoyed solving problems and could explain their ideas and concepts when they were learning about soundscapes. The learners could use digital technologies creatively to communicate ideas when they worked collaboratively, using the iPad app. They developed the ability to build up a body of knowledge regarding animation and they gained the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts, for example when storyboarding and writing stories.

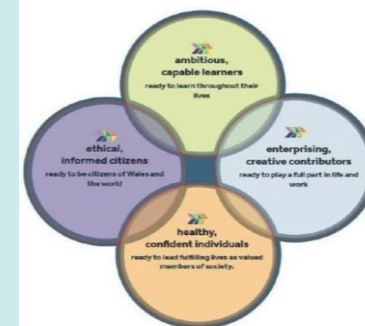
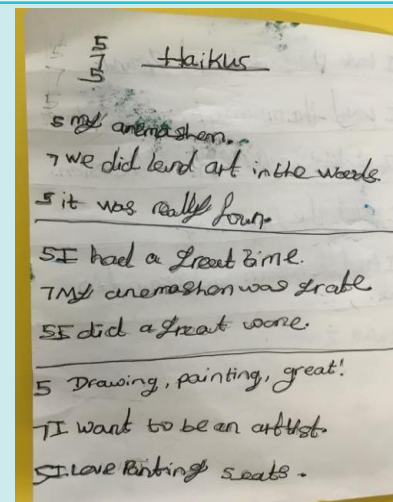


Blaengar a Chreadigol



Enterprising and Creative

**Enterprising, creative contributors:** The learners connected and applied their knowledge and skills to create ideas and products, when they studied the work of Rothko. They could think creatively to reframe and solve problems in the Haiku task. They were able to identify and grasp opportunities when performing poems. The pupils took measured risks and lead and play different roles in teams effectively and responsibly during the collaboration session based on animation. During the enquiry learners expressed ideas and emotions through different media such as writing, ink printing, plasticine and oracy.



**How does this enquiry and learning support development of the Four Core Purposes?**



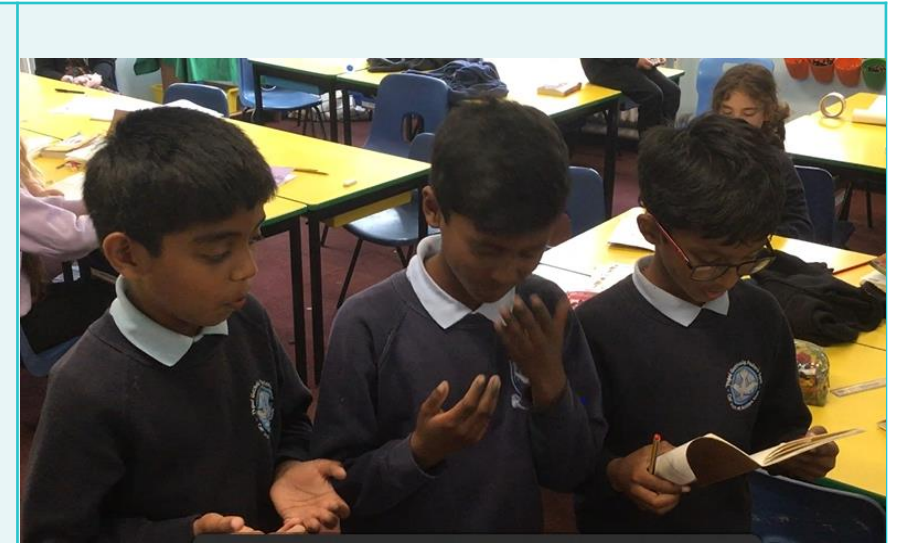
**Iach a Hyderus**



**Healthy and Confident**

**Healthy, confident individuals:** Learners faced and overcame challenges when making a sound foley. They had the confidence to participate in a performance reading out poems and haikus. They also were given opportunities to build their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy through role playing interviewing skills.

'It made me more comfortable to work with people that I am not used to work with'.

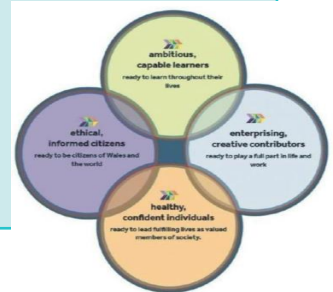


**Moesegol a Hyddysg**



**Ethical and Informed**

**Ethical informed citizens:** The project enable the learners find, evaluate and used evidence in forming views when undertaking the evaluation of art in the 'Teulu' exhibition. They understood and considered the impact of their actions when making choices and acting on them when they developed their stop-motion animation skills. Learners also respected the needs and rights of others for example when writing in their journals.



**How does this enquiry and learning support development of the Four Core Purposes?**

What we are delighted with on our enquiry journey!	What we have learnt to take forward into our next project!
The enthusiasm of the pupils was obvious throughout the project. It was encouraging to see the ability of the pupils to adapt to the different teaching styles of both creative practitioners.	To keep a work journal and a personal free-write journal because as a school we gave the pupils their journals as we had emphasised the privacy aspect and we have no record of their other project work.
92% of the pupils enjoyed the project, only 4% were unsure and 4% did not like the project. There was very positive feedback from the parents, they remarked how happy and engaged the children were with the whole project.	To include a class for the next stage of the project that is not involved in a Welsh sabbatical.
More children were using a wider range of vocabulary in their speech and written work by the end of the project as deduced from teacher observation.	It would be good plan ahead more as a school following the initial planning meetings with the creative practitioners to ensure that the skills learnt in the project are embedded into our school curriculum through the use of the spiral planning concept.
The whole creative team were excellent, and we consider, ourselves as a school, to be very lucky to have been working with Guy, Lynn and Charlie. Thank you to them for coming over to St Padarn's especially for our celebration afternoon!	In hindsight, we would have liked to have completed an extended piece of writing following the project. Although we did story writing as part of the process, we didn't delve into this as much detail as we would have done if we covered story writing as part of our language continuum work.