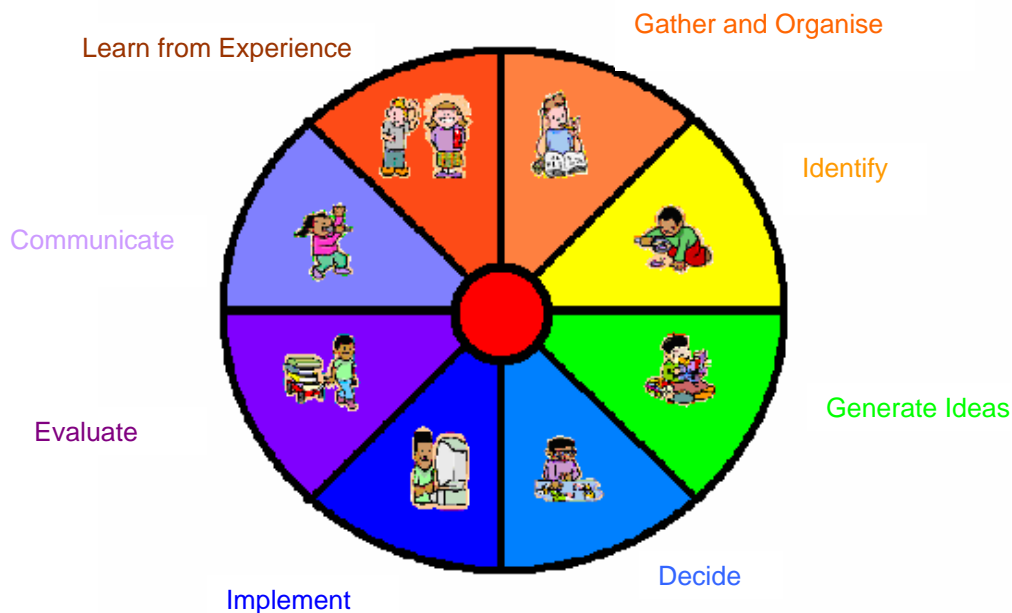


TASC comes to Ystrad Mynach.

Catherine Davies

TASC! What huge fun and a great learning experience for all pupils and teachers alike. Having attended an inspirational inset provided by Belle Wallace and Caerphilly County Borough Council on TASC I couldn't wait to get back to the classroom and have a go. So enthused was I that I planned for the following week to carry out a TASC project about the Hindu festival of Diwali with my Year 2 class. Having carried out further research I felt that I needed to make a few alterations to the TASC wheel so that my Year 2 pupils could access the wheel more effectively. I created a TASC wheel that was both pictorial and labelled therefore allowing all of the children access to the different segments.



Having prepared my new wheel, planning sheets and resources I was ready. The children were placed into groups of three chosen by me, given an explanation of what I expected them to do and they were off! I was really excited and pleased to see that pupils that wouldn't normally participate in lessons were very vocal and had definite ideas or strategies as to how their groups could carry out their idea. I was also surprised by some of the ideas that they came up with and their execution of their ideas. Their plans ranged from Rangoli patterns / mats, a snap game of the characters / artefacts involved with Diwali to diva lights, puppets of Rama, Sita, Hanuman and Ravana and beautiful door hangings.

The organisation was managed by creating a resource table e.g. books, posters, pictures and a materials table with a set of rules for safety and tidiness. The range

of skills demonstrated by all pupils was immense and covered every curriculum subject. Children were measuring, searching books and the internet, cutting, drawing choosing appropriate materials, rethinking when elements proved too difficult or didn't work as they had hoped.

Children evaluated their work well and gave valid reasons for things that they liked or would like to change next time. They were able to explain why they made the objects, how to use the objects; we viewed a puppet show of the story of Rama and Sita. When questioned by other members of staff and governors I was really amazed at the children's responses, information that they had found or worked out for themselves.

Our school then decided to carry out a whole school TASC project on Ancient Egypt. It was decided that each year group would take a particular topic e.g. Egyptian Art, Life, Royalty. When I informed my class of this and that we would be looking at mummies, their reaction was fantastic. Before I knew it I was bombarded with information books bought and borrowed from libraries, families and friends. Children were making things at home, and finding out what seemed to be the most gross facts possible. A favourite being: they pulled the brain out through the nose!

As anticipated the children threw themselves into the TASC project with enthusiasm and gusto. Children were placed into new groups of three and set about their task. Again the range of ideas was staggering. One group in particular worked with fantastic co-operation and delegation skills. Their product was 'Mummy Operation' a board game based on Operation. If you landed on a specific square you rolled the body part dice and attempted to extract e.g. the brain or liver using their home made tools from their papier mache mummy! I was very pleased to see that my children learnt from their last TASC project and scaled ideas down, tried things out before finally deciding and using a wide range of resources to continually refer to.

Each class produced a wide range of products from Nursery through to Year 6. Our Early Years department used the story of Joseph as stimulus. Children produced pyramids, Technicolour Dream Coats, camels, puppets and oasis.

All staff were enthusiastic themselves after overcoming some initial trepidation and concerns over, what if they can't do it? How much should I interfere? Our TASC project culminated in an exhibition and we all dressed up as Egyptians. Pupils were timetabled to go and view the exhibition and many pupils from Year 5 communicated their projects to us through dance, TV programme or a speech.

The children's responses were positive. "Can we do TASC again?" "The display looks like a museum" Every subject was covered during the week and the knowledge and confidence gained by our staff and pupils has been amazing. "What can we next?" was echoed by staff and pupils alike.



Some of us dressed as Egyptians for the end of TASC week.



A tomb wall painting; mask of Anubis and decorative collar, canopic jars, sarcophagus examples, mummies, Tutankhamun's death mask and two mummy games.

Independent skills carried out by Year 2 children



Sawing



Papier Mache



Communicating