

STORIES FROM THE SEA

SHIPWRECKED IN A STRANGE LAND



Key learning outcomes

Writing for a specific audience

Practising letter writing

Developing descriptive language

Activity

This activity is particularly suited for older KS2 children. They should imagine that they are sailors from 1000 years ago. They have been fishing when, suddenly, a huge whirlpool sucks them in and spits out their tiny wooden ship 1000 years into the future. As they climb up the shore they see things they have never seen before in their lives. The world is full of bizarre items that they cannot explain.

Begin by discussing what things are around today that were not here 1000 years ago. Obvious things to include are phones, computers, cars, planes etc., as well as large buildings and tarmac on roads.

The discussion should move on to the important question: if you want to tell your friends about these wonderful things but you don't know what they are, how do you describe them? The solution is that you talk

about them using similes based on things you are familiar with. For example, an aeroplane might be 'a great roaring bird in the sky, that swallows people up and spits them out again when it lands'.

Children can write a 'message in a bottle' on a piece of paper (it does not need to be put in a bottle but if it can that adds to the effect) talking about the strange and confusing thing they have seen. What do they think of it? Was it scary? Do they have any idea what it is for? They can sign the letter at the end. All the letters/bottles should be collected in to be 'cast into the sea'.

The bottles are then mixed up and handed back out to the children. This can be done in the same lesson or as another exercise at a later date. Explain that they are now back to being their modern-day selves. While

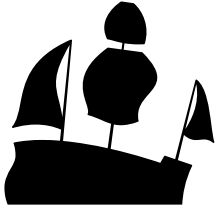


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walking along the beach/river etc., they find a bottle. When they open it they find a message inside. Ask the children to take out the letters and read them. Then, as modern-day people they can try and work out what the strange object is that is being described. They can then write a letter back explaining what the object is and what it actually does. Because the first person signed their letter, they can all be returned to the original senders.



More ideas

Try exchanging messages with a different class of children in the school, or even a different school altogether.



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