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MYSTERIOUS AFAN

A RESOURCE PACK FOR SCHOOLS ON THE FORGOTTEN
MEDIEVAL HISTORIES OF THE AFAN AREA



Be proud
Of who we are
Because we rest
On
The achievements
Of
Those who came
Before
Us.

Paula Denby 2024

CALON AFAN

Cwmni Buddiant Cymunedol **Calon Afan** Community Interest Company
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FOREWORD

From time to time, most teachers will feel they want to introduce a topic to their pupils and that they have not got the time or the resources to cover it effectively. Hopefully you will find this teaching resource useful. It could be suitable for all schools in Port Talbot both Welsh and English medium.

This Resource Pack is being offered by Calon Afan, a company formed to promote the history of Port Talbot and the Afan Valley, because we have discovered the fascinating stories of the medieval life of the Port Talbot and Afan Valley area of Wales, and we would love children to understand more of the earlier history of the area they live in: their 'bro' or 'milltir sgwar'. It has been written by four teachers, and we feel that this history can stimulate important work around the Cynefin element of the Curriculum for Wales, and encourage the building of skills.

The forgotten story of the Princes of Glamorgan and then the Lords of Afan, who held the land from the sea to Hirwaun, and between the Afan and the Nedd rivers, from 1094 until their line died out in the 14th century, is quite surprising. During that time, first through battle, collaboration with other Welsh dynasties, and then through diplomacy and inter-marriage they held their territory; a unique achievement at that time of early Norman invasion and Anglo-Norman aggression.

The pack contains some primary source material, with URL references for a series of articles published on the Calon Afan website, easily accessed for teachers' research; some legends, stories and teachers' resources, all in English and Welsh. It suggests ways into the intriguing local history of Port Talbot and the Afan Valley, with a smörgåsbord of ideas and some suggestions of strategies as to how this work around 'cynefin' can be used in the classroom in English and/or in Welsh.

We have designed the pack primarily for use with the Keystage 2 age group; however, most of the ideas can be adapted or tailored to older or younger children according to age and ability of the children by the experts who know them: the teachers.

Although it might look a bit like a treasure-chest, the pack is in 3 sections: see the Contents below for the full list of what it contains.

We hope you find what you discover useful and inspirational. But who knows what else there is to be discovered!

If you find anything out, please do let us know! Just email us on:
contact@calonafan.org

CONTENTS

SECTION 1: NOTES FOR TEACHERS

3 A5 booklets with suggestions of creative approaches to this material.

1. Battles Bards and Wild Neighbours: Paula Denby
2. Protecting Our Mountain: Dramatic Inquiry, an Inclusive Approach: Iona Towler-Evans
3. Cofio Cymry ein Cynefin: An approach to the Topic using Welsh: Margaret Jones & Eirwen Hopkins

SECTION 2: HISTORIC MATERIAL

Sections 2 & 3 are contained in this spiral A4 book, for ease of photocopying

1. Information for Teachers: Princes of Afan:
Articles about the medieval period from 1066 – 1450 generally and in Port Talbot and the Afan Valley, by local historian Tim Rees, Sally Roberts Jones, and Andrew Dulley: what we do know about the elusive dynasty known as the Princes of Afan, the local sites and buildings associated with them.
2. Information for Children on Medieval Life:
 - Armour and Weapons
 - Battles and Warfare
 - Children in Medieval Wales
 - Clothes and Fashion
 - Food and Feasting
 - Cooking and 2 Medieval Recipes
 - Feasting in Wales
 - Illness, Health and Medicine
 - Welsh Medieval Doctors: the Physicians of Myddfai
 - The Dyn Hysbys
 - Horses in the Middle Ages
 - People
 - Gerald of Wales
 - Matthew Paris
 - The Princes of Afan
 - Ieuan Gethin
 - Occupations:
 - Blacksmith
 - Candlemaker
 - Bow and Arrow Makers
 - Masons and Stone Carvers

- Farming in the Middle Ages
- Miller
- Scribe
- Wheelwright

SECTION 3: RESOURCES FOR THE CLASSROOM

Written Resources:

1. 'Y Frwydr' (The Battle): poem by Paula Denby in English (also in Video Part 2)
2. 'The Strange Story of the Christmas Horse': story by Sally Roberts Jones in English
3. 'Ceffyl y Fari Lwyd': story by Menna Moras in Welsh
4. Three Welsh folk songs with relevant words: in Welsh + translations in English
5. Three songs for small children about horses: in Welsh + translations in English
6. Notes on some local Welsh placenames and their meanings
7. The Mari Lwyd and the Cwmafan Mari Lwyd by Tim Rees
8. Three stories about medieval marriage in Bro Afan
9. English medieval phrases that we still use

Visual Resources:

10. An example of scroll for Dramatic Inquiry approach
11. An example of a commission letter for Dramatic Inquiry approach
12. An example of inscriptions to commemorate famous people

USB stick

Videos:

1. 'Viewpoints' in 4 parts – presenting different perspectives on what happened on Mynydd Dinas in medieval times, from the past and the present. For use with Dramatic Inquiry approach and others.
2. 'The Strange Story of the Christmas Horse': story in English by Sally Roberts Jones read by Owen Staton
3. 'Ceffyl y Fari Lwyd': story in Welsh by Menna Moras read by Owen Staton

Audio:

1. The Mari Lwyd and Cwmafan Mari Lwyd by Tim Rees, read by Non Broad

Bag of Craft Resources:

To support you in using 'Battles Bards and Wild Neighbours', a little bag of craft materials.