

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Funded by UK Government  Wedi ei ariannu gan Llywodraeth y DU



PROTECTING OUR MOUNTAIN



by Iona Towler-Evans

CALON AFAN

Cwmni Buddiant Cymunedol **Calon Afan** Community Interest Company
2 Brookway Close, Port Talbot, SA12 8EL Rhif y Cwmni/Company number: **15284549**
www.calonafan.org

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

FOREWORD

Here we introduce an inclusive engaging approach to exploring with children the exciting events in our cynefin over 1000 years ago. This approach is referred to as **Dramatic Inquiry**, a term coined by Brian Edmiston (2014).

We interpret this approach as a way of inviting young people to explore alongside you as the teacher, the dramatic stories of the past, in this case, on stories and events of the local area, in the Middle Ages, as well as on stories of the present, and considerations of the stories of the future.



Iona Towler-Evans
2024

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

PROTECTING OUR MOUNTAIN

With Dramatic Inquiry, all can try out possible ways of being in relation to one another and in relation to whatever subject we are exploring (Edmiston & Towler-Evans, 2022) We feel that the importance of a pack like this is that it places Wales at the centre of the story.

We hope and intend that the pack will encourage us to look at history from a Welsh point of view, and that includes the lands of Wales, its people and its culture, and contribute to Cynefin as defined by the Curriculum for Wales.

The way we interpret the use of drama in education is to use it to help us imagine other times and other places, to dramatise events in fictional worlds, based on historical facts, which children can imagine together, along with their teacher, so as to provide children with the opportunity of inquiring into the past, significant to their heritage. We therefore offer strategies and conventions, based on the work of Dorothy Heathcote (1984, 2003) for building these worlds, along with some useful guidelines for their application with children.

The dramatic inquiry approach helps us to build a meaningful, engaging, and purposeful context for a range of cross-curricular possibilities. You will find a list of strategies in Appendix 1.

This approach divides into four parts as follows:

- Part 1 Celebrating Welsh Culture - before the Normans came**
- Part 2 Invasion (early invasion by the Normans in Wales circa1081)**
- Part 3 How we learn to live together – intermarriage and diplomacy**
- Part 4 Connecting the past to the present and future**

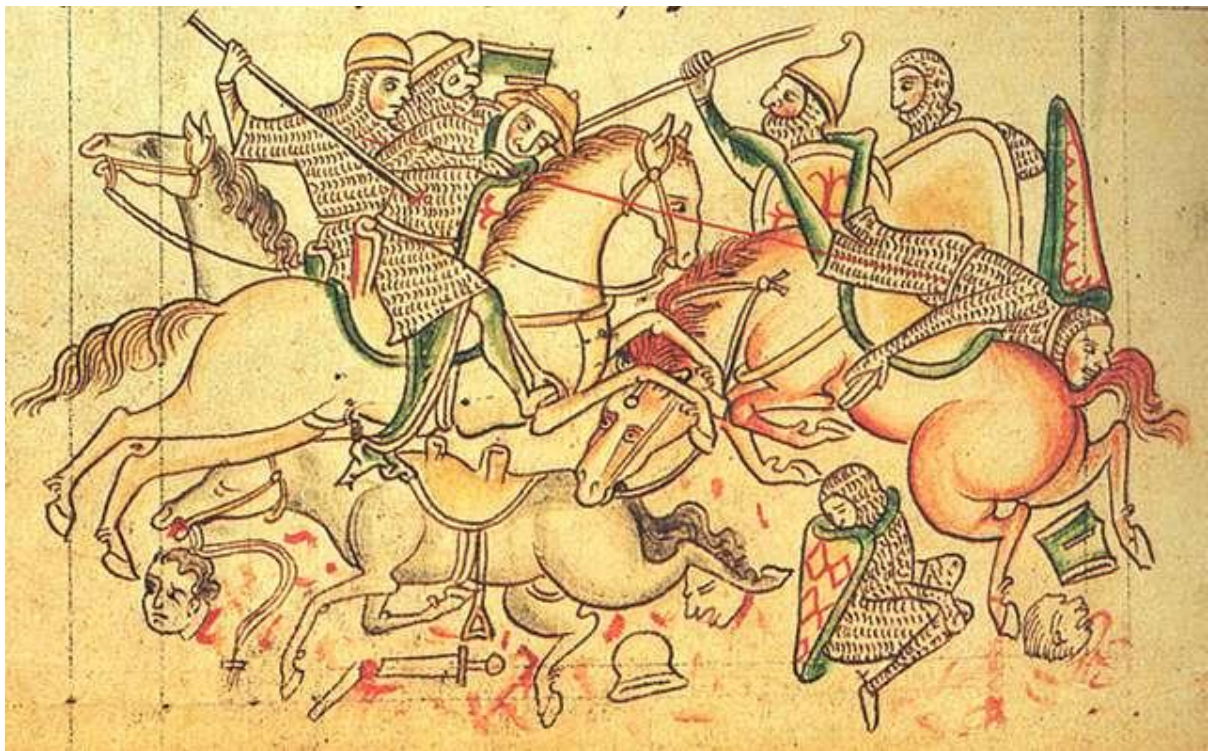
MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

We suggest approaches to each part of the work, which have been planned sequentially, to enable children to imagine the world of the local people of Wales, prior to the arrival of the Normans, in order that they have the opportunity to invest in the work, before they move on to invasion and the way the Normans and the Welsh co-existed.

The Video

To assist you in introducing each Part of the project, we have provided a video in four parts, with stories which reflect the focus of Part 1, and contain accessible and visual material relevant to the project.

The video can be used alongside the Dramatic Inquiry approach and/or in other ways.



Battle of Damietta in 1218 Čeština: Bitva u Damietty Public domain reproduction of illuminated medieval manuscript page

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Mysterious Afan Viewpoints Part 1: Wales before the Normans circa 1081

Stories which look and celebrate Welsh culture at the time before the Normans came.



King Hywel Dda (Hywel the Good). From a Latin copy of the Laws of Hywel Dda, National Library of Wales; the Peniarth Manuscripts. Wikimedia Commons

The music/singing of Wales is played as a background to views of Mynydd Dinas, Port Talbot. The perspectives of people and features from the past, and the present reflect that time. You can use Section 2 Historic Material to find information about daily life in the Middle Ages. We include three examples you may wish to share with the children, but no doubt you will have other roles you wish to introduce:

1. The perspective of a Welsh farmer looking for a missing sheep, on a mountain
2. The perspective of a yew tree in the churchyard. I wonder what and who it sees. If only it could speak to us.....
3. The perspective of a poet/singer today, who writes/sings about the mountain

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Possible inquiry questions:

- **What was life like a thousand years ago, before the Normans came in 1081? (This is more factual)**
- **What made life rich and rewarding?**
- **What made it challenging?**
- **What was celebrated?**

Possible Steps in:

The children can be introduced to the Video Part 1, where they can observe and hear stories of Welsh culture from different perspectives. These will prepare them to engage in activities intended to imagine life in a Welsh community in the past. The spoken perspectives will be set against the background of Mynydd Dinas.

The pack provides ideas and resources for creating a map of an area in Wales (like Mynydd Dinas), as reflected in the Video.

We suggest using a cloth map, and creating contours, using crunched up newspaper to create mountainous areas, and fabric for the river and different coloured wools and fabric for the forest. The map can be revisited as you work through the pack, and be useful in allowing the children to identify places they might know as well as changes across time.

- A. Explore what life was like for people in Wales, seeing the map from the Welsh point of view.
- What might people be doing in their everyday lives? Are they shepherds? Farmers? Do they have boats on the river? Do they fish?
 - How did they travel from place to place?

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Considering life when it was fairly stable. Looking at images of everyday life (See Section 2: Historical Material: e.g. Occupations) to support the activity.

The class may wish to represent the people and create frozen images (tableaux) of what they are doing. A fuller description of Tableaux and how you may develop it is provided in Appendix 1.

- i. Examine some of the weapons that ordinary Welsh people could have used when they were called to war for their princes. How did they defend their land and protect themselves from intruders? It may be useful to discuss what they didn't have, like guns and modern-day weapons, or sophisticated spears as the Normans did. (For images of weapons, see Folder: Historical Material). Having actual objects of some items will be interesting for the children.
- ii. Spread the map out on the floor and have the children stand around it. Invite them to imagine that they are standing or sitting in a particular location on the map on a day at this time. You may wish to model for the children by choosing a location on the map, and say, for example, 'I am standing or crouching or hiding ...behind the/ in front of And from here I can see and hear.....' We could all make the sounds together or use some percussion instruments to create the sounds. At this point they do not have to embody people although some children will want to do this.

You may invite the children to write down their responses. These could develop later into their own narratives or poems.

- iii. Use the game 'Cross the Circle' (See Appendix 1) to embody and share some of their prior knowledge as well as their ideas. Invite the class to stand in a circle, and cross the circle to embody ideas such as the following:

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

- Cross the circle as a person at this time travelling from one place to another. How are you going to do it?
- Cross the circle as if you are tending to your cattle or sheep
- Cross the circle as if you are caught in a thunderstorm and your crops are in danger of being wiped out.
- Cross the circle as if you are using one of the weapons, to ward off an enemy.
- Cross the circle as if you are creeping through the forest, trying not to be seen or heard.

You can join in. Dialogue about what they know and want to know. You can show them information in action e.g. How to round up sheep.



Medieval ploughing

<https://allisondreid.com/2017/03/06/medieval-monday-the-labors-of-march/>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Mysterious Afan Viewpoints Part 2: Invasion

Viewpoints of both sides of the battles



By Dan Koehl - Tapestry de Bayeux, CC BY-SA 3.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=658776>

This resource is supported by music which suggests marching to battle. We include the following perspectives you may wish to share with the children, and the poem by Paula Denby (See Section three which will support your use of Narration:

1. Poem by Paula Denby 'Silent in the Woods'.
2. The perspective of a young Norman knight, going into battle for the first time.

This video also contains two fictionalised stories about the demise of the Norman soldier, Herbert FitzMatthew, narrated by the storyteller, Owen Staton.

- English Story by Sally Roberts Jones
- Welsh Story by Menna Moras
- The Cwmafan Mari Lwyd, adapted from accounts by Tim Rees.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

The finding of the horse's skull will be picked up in Part 4, where we look at how the story has continued to modern times.

Possible inquiry question:

How might people in Wales have responded to an invasion?

Possible steps in:

- i. Introduce the idea that there may be another kind of invasion, not just our usual quarrels, but from a different force. The teacher here can represent one of the people who live in the mountain.

You may suggest to the class,

'Can we agree that I am one of you, one of the Welsh people, farmers, traders in this community? Where might you be when I come in with some news?'

The children may agree that they are having a meeting in the community about concerns about their crop or whatever the children decide. You may simply agree that as you walk from the door way, for example or a place in your classroom, that is when you will represent someone with a message for them.

'The Normans are coming; people are talking about it in the village.....they are travelling East of here. They say they have taken over English land and there are many of them...'

The teacher may lay out photographs or drawings, or whatever can introduce the Normans (possibly include actual replicas of weapons)

It may be useful to look at an image of the Bayeux Tapestry, and/or illustrations by Matthew Paris (See Section 2) to look at the weapons, and armoury the Normans used in their fighting in England and Wales.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Look at a section of the Bayeux Tapestry. Find some pictures from it and lay them out on the floor, explaining that this is a depiction of the invasion that happened 25 years earlier than when the Normans defeated the Anglo Saxons. They will see the depiction of the fighting.

The following questions may guide dialogue from a Welsh position:

'What are we up against?'

'What do the Normans have, in terms of number of men, armour and weapons. By now they may have even more than that and better weapons'

'Are they better armed than us?'

'Do they look confident?'

'What chance do we have?'

The teacher may return to the story as the messenger and the children, as the people on the mountain, can talk to them and question them. (In Appendix 1 we provide guidance to help you approach this and how you deal with the unexpected.)

- ii. You might like to give the children the opportunity to reflect on what they know; think they know and want to find out. What we know is what we all agree actually must have happened. What we think we know is a range of ideas from individual children. What we want to find out will steer us in how we move on.

You may divide the columns on a flip chart, for example:

- ***What we know*** e.g.
 - *We know that the Normans want to take over land*
 - *We know they are a threat to our land*
- ***What we think we know*** e.g.
 - *They are powerful*
 - *They have a large army*

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

- **What we want to find out?** e.g.
 - *Why were they intent on claiming land that wasn't rightfully theirs?*
 - *What were they hoping to achieve?*
 - *How did the Welsh deal with them?*

iii. It is likely that they will want to know how it was when the Normans came, and they have to decide how to respond.

We go back into the story and represent the Normans. We imagine them lined up with their weapons, shields and helmets. They may use the images you have provided in the previous exercise to support their setting up, to position themselves as if they are part of a Norman army. You may invite one or two of the children to step out and see the image of the Norman army that the group have created, and think about *'How it was seen by the Welsh, what might have been going through their mind?'* Music may be used to emphasise the occasion of a marching to war (available in Part 2 of the Video)

Stepping back into the story world, as the teacher you may represent the leader, who reads from a scroll (for example of scroll see Section 3), along the following lines:

'We have come to claim the land by order of the King of England as part of his territories. Are you ready? Show us your weapons. You have until midday to surrender'

iv. Out of the story world you could pose a question, as if you are Welsh defenders:

'What are we going to do? We have four options, we can surrender, hide, negotiate or fight?'

Reflect with the children the strength of each option. Using drama, you can actually test them all out.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

(a) We may try out the option of fighting. Use 'Y Frwydr (The Battle)' by Paula Denby (Section 3 and Video Part 2) to narrate the action, which we listen to from Part 2 of the Video, or the teacher may wish to retell it as the class decide on their position, imagined from the map but embodied in the classroom. The children may decide on three positions they take to reflect the stanzas in the poem, and they can move from one position to the other as the teacher narrates the poem or the videoed resource is played.



The death of Herbert FitzMatthew by Matthew Paris C 1350
Matthaei Paris Chronica Maiora II Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

b) If we decide to hide, we identify on the map good places to hide as they approach (Possible narration provided in Example of a Narrative Voice in Dramatic Conventions Appendix 1).

c) Negotiate. The class can prepare how they may best negotiate with the Normans.

What would matter to them?

How can we persuade them to re think their capture?

What are we prepared to give up?

How can we re negotiate an agreement?

d) Surrender. We invite the children to put arguments forward for surrender, and arguments against surrender.

- v. The children may like to try out a strategy called Conscience Alley (See Dramatic Conventions in Appendix 1). In this strategy, half the class line up on one side while the other half line up on the other side. One side represents those who think we ought to hide or surrender, and the other side represent those who think we ought to fight or negotiate. Each side represents the ‘conscience’ of the Welsh army. The teacher or a child could represent one of the Welsh ‘fighters. As they walk down in between the lines, each child (from the lines) shares a thought which may be circling in the child’s head (as the Welsh ‘fighters’), for example, a child from a line on one side may say,

‘We must fight for what is ours’ or

‘We cannot show weakness by hiding’.

On the other side a child from that line may say:

‘We must hide, we know places in the forest where they will never find us’ or

‘If they can’t see us, they will leave us alone and our families will be safe’.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

The child/teacher in the centre decides which approach she/he/they, as a representative of the Welsh 'fighters', should take and signals this by moving to a particular agreed point at the end of the line.

The child /teacher at the centre can then reflect with the group on his/her decision. At what point did she/he decide? Or was he/she undecided? What did they hear from the voices from the lines which swayed their decision? (For details and guidelines of Conscience Alley convention, see Dramatic Conventions Appendix 1)

In order to explore the point of view of the Norman Army, you may wish to again use the strategy of the 'Conscience Alley', but this time represent the leader of the Norman army, who says:

'We have come to claim the land on order of the King of England as part of his territories. Are you ready? Show us your weapons. You have until the imminent time of midday to surrender.'

- vi. Move to the story of Herbert FitzMatthew which we can listen to from Video 3 (English story) and 4 (Welsh language story and 5 The Cwmafan Mari Lwyd) titles.

A Welsh footsoldier killing Herbert FitzMatthew by throwing a stone from an elevated position down onto the knight, after which the horse bolted and was captured by a local Welsh hill farmer.

Reflect on what this might have meant in terms of the relationship between the Welsh and the Normans.



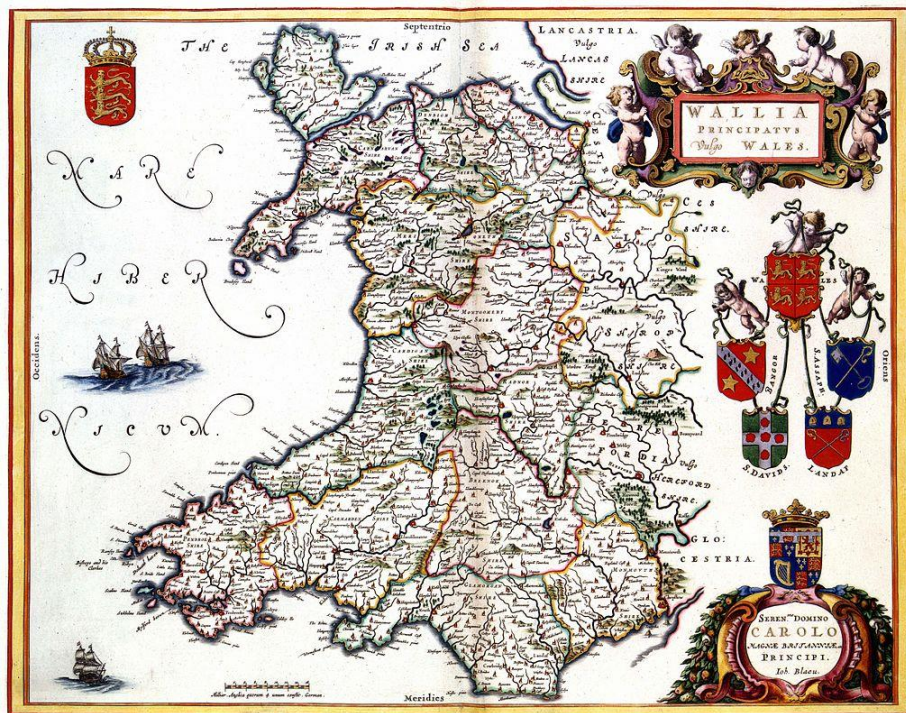
Detail of a miniature of a horse from a bestiary with theological texts, England, c. 1200 – c. 1210, Royal MS 12 C XIX, f. 34r

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Do place names on the Mountain give any suggestion of events that might have happened there? (See Section 3).



1841 Tithe Map of Baglan showing Tynytwr, Tŷ Newydd, Gadlish fach & Gadlish Isaf
West Glamorgan Archives



Atlas Van der Hagen KW1049B11 031-LLIA PRINCIPATUS Vulgo WALES..jpeg

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Mysterious Afan Viewpoints Part 3: Marriage and Diplomacy

The part played by marriage in the peace between Normans and Welsh



The betrothal of Richard II to Isabella of Valois; she was six years old.
Anonymous - <http://www.luminarium.org/encyclopedia/richard2isabella2.jpg>
Public Domain.

We hear the thoughts of a Welsh young girl who is promised to another in marriage as a way of sealing the peace, and those of a young boy, who has been engaged in marriage from a young age.

Possible inquiry questions:

- **How might the Welsh and the Normans have learned to live together?**
- **How might peace have been established?**
- **How might marriage have made a difference to the relationships between the Normans and the Welsh?**

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Possible steps in

- i. As the teacher, you explain that:

There were parts of Wales where the Normans and Welsh co-existed. That is what happened here in Afan. When you read about the history there is a statement that says, 'Over time, they became more Norman than Welsh' (Wikipedia)

Get the children to interrogate what this might mean, and whose agenda that statement belongs to:

I wonder what that means, and from whose perspective did someone think that the Welsh became more Norman?

It will be interesting to think about that, so what do you think might have happened? Did they dress like the Normans? Did they eat the same food as the Normans? Did they share any of their customs?

Can we examine people's family names at the time and the titles they adopted? For example: Lords, an English word is now often used to refer to the Welsh Princes of Afan.

How far did the Welsh protect their own customs and culture? (for information about patrons of poetry and music see Sections 2 and 3.)

Are there customs today that date back to that time that have been protected over the years? This is something the children might research. (Also see 'The Cwmafan Mari Lwyd' in Section 3)

This might be a useful thing to reflect on. The teacher ponders with the children as to why that was '*I wonder why that was?*'

Encourage the children to share their interpretations.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Narrator picks up the story on the video.

Invite the children to identify this on the map they have created.

Also, the pub is in the town, named after one of the Lords, Lord Caradog and I think our map might not stretch that far....

- i. You may introduce the idea of intermarriage.

One way they became more inter-related was through marriage.

I wonder who might have had an opinion about arranged marriages between heads of families? I wonder what they thought?

Would the people living in the Afan Valley, growing their barley, have heard about it? What might they have thought?

What might the daughters or someone who were promised to each other by their elders have thought? Sons had the same fate... they were often all betrothed as small children.

Why might people at that time have agreed these betrothals between the Welsh and the Normans?

There are three stories to draw on and refer to (See Section 3)

- ii. The children may select an attitude from a particular person's point of view.

One idea might be to create colour coded cards so that children join another child holding the same-coloured card, for example green cards may be for people working on the land, blue cards may be for people in the hierarchy and their reasons for wanting the marriage between a Norman and a Welsh household to take place, yellow cards may be for the young people whose life is decided for them, and so on.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

For example, on a Hierarchy card you may scribe the following attitude of a knight:

'I must persuade him to have my son marry his daughter or we attack: at least this way we will have a claim on their land.'

If we were to hear the conversations, they had about this, what might they be? The children may create just three lines of the conversation to share with others and we can listen in to each other's conversations using a convention called 'Overheard Conversations' (See Dramatic Inquiry Conventions Appendix 1)

v. A development from this is to explore the dilemma of the two young people who do not want to be betrothed.

Possibly use may be made of the Conscience Alley convention here, thinking through the consequences of escaping or resisting the authority of their elders,

Get the class through this exercise to consider the consequences of rebelling against the arranged marriage?

What if one of the young people escaped? Where would they go? What might be the consequences of their action?



A 16th C Tuscan bridal, or marriage, chest

Thomas Quine, CC BY 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Mysterious Afan Viewpoints Part 4: Where we are today?

The video explores modern aspects of a peaceful Wales.



The Chepstow Mari Lwyd
<https://chepstowwassailmari.co.uk/about/>

Here we could include the story from a modern-day perspective about the finding of the horse's skull, but shared from the point of view of the farmer who relates the story, and connects it to the tradition of the Mari Lwyd.

Consider locations of likely places we imagine the 'horse's skull' may have been found today. Where do we imagine the battle took place?

Possible inquiry questions:

- How does the past connect to the present and what are some of the implications for the future?
- Why do people change?
- What changes over time, and what remains the same?
- Why are stories from Wales's history important to remember?
- How do we honour the stories that have been handed down to us?

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Possible steps in:

After watching the videoed resource, discuss with the children the story of the Norman Horse; how it lives on and maybe changes over time. It provides an example of how stories live on through generations, and are celebrated today e.g. the Mari Lwyd (See Video 5: 'The Cwmafan Mari Lwyd', and the stories in English and in Welsh).

Connected to the story of the Welsh footsoldier who killed Herbert FitzMatthew (referred to in Part 1) we may explore in this section the story of the horse having been captured after the battle and which possibly went on to sire a lineage of horses, the breed of which has continued into modern times on a local farm.



Cathael Idris: Welsh Cob Section D

Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11099029>

The children may report on stories in their own lives that have been around for generations. This is a possibility for their own research

- i. You could set up a conversation as if between the farmer of the time of the FitzMatthew event, who caught his horse, and the farmer of 1990's whose horse he believed was a descendent of the horse ridden by FitzMatthew; or a conversation between FitzMatthew himself and the 1990's farmer, where the children may talk across time to FitzMatthew. (See Talking Across Time dramatic inquiry convention in Appendix 1).

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

- ii. The children could work on a piece of Chamber Theatre where the events of the story are told from different perspectives. These may include stories from the past, juxtaposed with stories of the present. Chamber Theatre lends itself to narrative writing (See Chamber Theatre guidance in Appendix 2 for a fuller explanation)

- iii. How the past connects to the present

Where we are today: a purpose for their work, beyond the classroom, either through fiction or through direct communication with the community.

Talking to a real historian: ideally, you might be able to have a real-life visitor such as a local historian with specialist knowledge (see list of names and contacts in Section 4)

Alternatively, a role could be introduced here with the teacher representing a historian e.g. from a historical society. The children can ask questions.

One example of a modern connection to the past is The Senedd, The Welsh Assembly today, illustrating the significance of how leaders in Wales represent the people. Is this different from how things were in Medieval times?



<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=24000265>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Possibly show a brief slide show of the Senedd. That is something to celebrate - the Welsh Assembly and the Welsh Curriculum.

It doesn't mean we are better than other nations like England, but we now have more local democratic control. The story we explored in Part One was an example of the end of local control through Anglo-Norman domination. Normans invaded England first, and subjected the Anglo-Saxons to their demands, so it's not as if the English did it to Wales alone.

How stories live on through art

- iv. One of the ways we commemorate the past is through art, for example the Bayeux Tapestry, which depicted the Battle of Hastings, the drawings by Matthew Paris, a monk from St Albans, or other medieval illustrators (See Section 2: Historical Material). You may open up the idea of depicting the stories they have explored from the local history you have worked on:

I wonder what we would create in a similar depiction about the Welsh and the Anglo Normans in battle?

Photographs of their tableaux of significant moments in their work as ways of assembling the event in a tapestry? Or other artistic/visual form is a possibility at this stage

- v. If we were to create a sculpture of a person or a group of people, from the events we have explored from local stories, what do we think would be worth remembering today, who might it be and what might it look like?

Allow the children to direct you as the teacher as one of their selected depictions from a medieval picture? As an extension to this, children may 'sculpt' each other into a depiction they think would honour the Welsh people in the events we have explored. ('Sculpting' is a dramatic convention which is explained more fully in Appendix 1.)

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

- vi. Have examples of sayings on plaques of people in Welsh history and what they say. Invite the children to interrogate the text and look for the implications of what it means, and show how it honours their lives (For examples of this see Section 3.)

You might invite the children to create a plaque to accompany their 'sculpture' (or tableau) or art work with a saying on which might be of relevance for people today.

Where might you place it?

You might refer back to the map. What **could** the plaque say.?

At this point it would be a great idea to overlay a transparent sheet of some kind on to the map. On the sheet, show the locations that are there today and those that remain the same, to show change over time. This could be done with buildings, but also with the vegetation and livestock.

No sheep graze on the mountain today; there are now horses and highland cattle. Why might this be? Change over time. (Questions as to what has happened to the woollen industry, set up by the monks of Margam Abbey.)



Path on Mynydd Dinas by Gareth James, CC BY-SA 2.0
<<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>>, via Wikimedia Commons

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Where we are today

A purpose for their work, beyond the classroom, either through fiction or through direct communication with the community.

- vii. In the classroom (if it's an actual request) or in a drama (if its fictional) they may be invited to meet the needs of a client.

For a fictional example, e.g. the National Museum of Wales (<https://museum.wales/stfagans/>) might be thinking of doing an online website to get young people interested. They are concerned that people in the area do not know their own history, and there is a different story to be told. (For an example of a letter commissioning the children, which you may wish to use or adapt, see Section 3)

Some of the questions you might explore with children are:

- 'Are these stories ones we would take on and share today?'
- 'Why is it worth knowing about?'
- 'Why is the history of Wales important to the people of Wales?'
- 'How do we achieve peace today?'

See in the video, the marriage certificate of Edward II with Isabella of France – this is kept and can be viewed on request in the West Glamorgan Archives: for link see:

<https://www.swansea.gov.uk/article/13852/The-marriage-contract-of-Edward-II-1303>.



See also examples of the Women's Peace Movement in South Wales (for details of their schools' pack for further guidance and resources see 'Battles, Bards and Wild Neighbours')

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

And examples of other Welsh people who have campaigned for peace.

Statue by Albert Toft of Henry Richard, Tregaron, Ceredigion
'The Apostle of Peace'
in recognition of his work with the
Peace Society.



Photograph: Roger Kidd: Wikimedia Commons



Temple of Peace and Health, Cathays, Cardiff

By Ham - CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=25366313>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Dramatic Inquiry Approach: Appendix 1 Dramatic Conventions referred to in the booklet

Description of Dramatic Convention	Purpose
<p>Narration</p> <p>This can be used in or out of the dramatic context. The teacher can provide a narrative link, atmosphere or commentary, initiate a drama, move the action on, create tension etc. Participants might also report back in story form, providing narrative to accompanying action.</p>	<p>This provides information in familiar form, giving shape and form to activity.</p> <p>It can arouse curiosity, interest and emphasises a sense of atmosphere, place and poetic description.</p> <p>It involves feelings/mood.</p>
<p>Example of a Narrative voice</p> <p>Teacher Narration to support the drama of hiding in the Mountains: e.g.</p> <p><i>'Men hid, some in the dense forest, in the heathlands, concealed by bracken, the huge yew tree and bell heather, while others bravely moved down the slopes of the mountain, temporarily concealed by the grazing cattle. The vast expanse of Swansea Bay before them, they knew that the river was between them and their enemy.'</i></p>	<p>This supports the children in visualising the locations they are imagining as the Welsh soldiers in the mountain</p>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

<p><i>The heaviness of huge horses helped them feel protected, their hands on their long bows, they prepared to sling, with their arrows and stones as missiles. Their wives, some of them expert slingers, indoors but close, protecting their children, while the older children helped their fathers anticipate the battle. The Norman shields glistened, and the cantering of their great stallions drew near. They were here’.</i></p>	
<p>Teacher in Role</p> <p>When you are in role, you are joining in the drama, but you are still controlling the situation: you are not giving up your ability to keep children safe, or to get work of a high standard.</p> <p>The major difference between role work and ordinary classroom teaching is really just a change or shift in language. As Heathcote (1997) says, ‘you talk as if it’s happening now’, in other words, it’s the difference between saying:</p> <p>‘They heard the hooves of the Norman’s horses and retrieved their weapons’</p> <p>and saying:</p>	<p>Role is a very useful teaching tool. It can be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to give information, to offer a challenge, to question decisions (especially if the children try to give easy solutions to problems), to act as a focus and a tension, which can help to deepen children’s involvement in the drama

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

<p><i>'I can hear the clatter of hooves. They are close. Get your weapons ready, men'.</i></p> <p>You can stay in role for a very short time, and step out and address them as their teacher. If children respond in a way that you didn't anticipate, and you are not sure how to respond, you can step out of the story world and discuss it with the class, e.g.</p> <p><i>'I really did not expect Sarah to say 'My arrow is blunt!'</i></p> <p>and you might rewind the drama to a 'preparation of weapons activity.</p>	
<p>Cross the circle</p> <p>This is a predictable, non-threatening game, to embody the actions of characters or roles in a narrative, for very short periods of time.</p> <p>Participants stand in a circle. The idea is that, in answering a question, everyone can cross the circle at the same time ending up at a different point on the perimeter. (Edmiston, 2014 p42)</p>	<p>This exercise extends participants' social learning.</p> <p>It builds a sense of community in the classroom.</p> <p>Participants share what they already know and learn from one another.</p> <p>It is fun and non-threatening</p>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

<p>Tableaux or 'Still Images'</p> <p>Children are familiar with the idea of frozen action through film and television, and this technique of holding a dramatic position, for example, as a knight retrieving his sword, absolutely still, is a great way of sharing ideas non-verbally.</p> <p>It is worth giving some time to establishing the discipline of absolute stillness from the children. You may invite them to imagine they are in a photograph or painting.</p>	<p>The use of a tableau (sometimes called a freeze frame or a still image) can prove to be a useful control.</p> <p>Children are usually quick to appreciate the dramatic effect of seeing each other's images and this may prompt artistic considerations of their work.</p> <p>The technique is also a useful and secure starting point for spontaneous drama, when the children bring their images to life for a short time before being asked to freeze the action again.</p>
<p>Overheard Conversations</p> <p>The children select a snippet of their conversation in a short scene or improvisation to be shared with their peers in the classroom.</p> <p>The class are still and listening; the teacher may just walk past each group or tap one of them lightly on the shoulder so they can share their snippet of conversation (no more than 3 or 4 lines).</p>	<p>This gives every child the opportunity to actively contribute to the fiction and be listened to.</p> <p>They can also gather and share information about role and narrative quickly</p> <p>They are enabled to be selective and focus on the essence of the scene.</p>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

<p>Talking Across Time</p> <p>In this convention, children are invited to talk to someone across time.</p> <p>Agree with the children that you, in role, for example as a farmer from the past, who caught FitzMatthew's horse, can speak to a farmer in modern day who relates the story of the discovery of the horse's skull. In this way the children can represent collectively the perspective of the farmer who had discovered the horse's skull. The children may, however, wish to speak to the farmer from the past, as themselves.</p> <p>Invite a child to stand if they have a question for the farmer, and before they ask their question of him, they ask 'May I/we enter your time?' The 'farmer responds with, 'Yes, you may' The child then asks his question or makes his statement</p>	<p>This convention helps children to investigate past events from the point of view of a person who lived then.</p> <p>It makes the past come to life, and is an intriguing way of exploring it. The children have agency over what they are really interested in finding out about the event, and this helps the teacher to recognise the particular interests of the children.</p> <p>This convention also slows the drama down, creating time for reflection. The ritualistic way in which children ask. 'May I enter your time' makes their choice of question or statement significant</p>
<p>Conscience Alley (also known as Decision Alley and Thought Tunnel)</p> <p>The class splits into two lines facing each other (standing about</p>	<p>This game helps the children recognise the strengths and</p>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

<p>a metre apart). A child/teacher in a particular role passes between the lines at a moment of indecision or dilemma in the drama. As the role passes by each person in the line, they can speak aloud their advice to the role.</p> <p>The voices in each line try to persuade the person walking through with their advice. The advice from each line is in complete contrast to the advice offered by the opposite line.</p> <p>The child/teacher in role at the centre of this advice moves to an agreed part of the line once they have heard the various advice given. Or they may be undecided and remain in the centre. It is worth the role reflecting with the children on the most powerful advice received before they made their decision</p>	<p>weaknesses of a course of action.</p> <p>It gives an opportunity for everyone to influence a role's actions.</p> <p>It helps the children explore the different perspectives involved in making decisions.</p> <p>It supports children's use of persuasive language</p>
<p>Sculpting</p> <p>Using 'sculpting' children are invited to mould you as the teacher as if you are clay or some other sculpting material. They as the 'sculptors' might give verbal instructions to you or this can be done with a peer. This can be</p>	<p>This exercise</p> <p>empowers the children to make decisions through creating a 3D image</p>

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

done as a group or whole class activity with several 'sculptors' and the 'clay' made up collectively of several people.

They may physically move you into a position, by moving your arm, for example into a gesture, as appropriate. Once a 'sculpture' has been created it is worth supporting the children in reflecting on the 'sculpture/s' they have created and interpreting its meaning within the story world of the drama.

'Sculptures' can be interpreted literally, for example a 'sculpture' may be created of one of the Princesses of Afan and can be given a plaque (written or spoken).

As the teacher, you may facilitate the game with suggestions such as:

When people visit this sculpture what might they want people to remember about the Lords of Afan?

What would people at the time have said about them?

Where might we place this statue in the area?

breaks down physical barriers between children in a safe way, providing a tactile experience.

provides an opportunity for communicating ideas in an artistic interpretation

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Chamber Theatre

Chamber Theatre format allow students to make literally texts 'stand up' in dramatic action in 'now immediate' time, as does theatre (Dorothy Heathcote, 1995)

Please see more detailed notes in Appendix 2, with an example of how e.g. the story by Sally Robert Jones (See Section 3) 'The Strange Story of the Christmas Horse' or if working in Welsh, the story by Menna Moras, (See Section 3), 'Hanes Rhyfeddol Pen Ceffyl Cwmafan', can be used for Chamber Theatre.

The purpose of Chamber theatre is to encourage children to interrogate text for meaning and to use a protective and structured dramatic form to explore the narrative.

It also enables children to explore a range of perspectives on a common event.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

Some Notes on the use of Chamber Theatre: Appendix 2

Extract from 'The Strange Story of the Christmas Horse' by Sally Robert Jones as an example of how we may tackle it using Chamber Theatre

'Now one day the Earl sent one of his households, a young man called Herbert FitzMatthew, with a party of soldiers, to see what they could collect from the local people in the lordship of Afan. Of course, the local people were not at all happy at being asked to send money to the Earl, let alone to the king far away in London, and that was why young FitzMatthew had soldiers with him.

'Herbert FitzMatthew was an esquire – that meant that he was not yet a fully-fledged knight, but he knew that if he did well in this important errand, he could expect to be knighted and become Sir Herbert. So now he rode along, feeling very important, in his shiny new armour, on his fine new war horse, at the head of his little army. He was particularly proud of his horse, and he had named it Pegasus after the flying horse in the old legends, because when it went at a gallop it was as fast as the wind, almost taking off as it went.

'They had marched past the little village of Aberafan, then up into the valley alongside the river and up into the hills, and so far there had been no sign of any enemy. It was hot in the sun with just a little breeze and Herbert pushed up the visor of his helmet to feel the fresh air on his face. He looked around and then saw a little band of Welshmen on the slope above him. They were shouting and brandishing sticks and clubs.

'Let's chase those ragged rascals away,' he cried, and began to loosen his sword, ready for battle. But just then one of the Welshmen, a giant of a man with muscles like Hercules, hurled a great boulder at him. It hit FitzMatthew on the head and knocked him out of his saddle, down onto a rocky outcrop where he lay as still as a stone. His men rushed to save him, but it was too late. Herbert FitzMatthew was dead.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

'The men were so busy looking to see what had happened to their leader that no-one thought to make sure that Pegasus was safe. The horse had been startled by his master falling onto the ground and he had run off into the valley. By the time they remembered to look for him. Pegasus was far away, out of sight, and though they did search for a while, in the end they gave up and went back to Cardiff to report to the Earl, taking FitzMatthew with them.

'A farmer found Pegasus the next day. He took the grand trappings off the horse – saddle and bridle and the rest – and put him in the stable along with his own cart horse, and there Pegasus stayed. In due time he fathered a number of handsome sons, and the story of how their ancestor had come to Cwmclais farm was handed down in the family of the farmer who had found him. At last, as a way of remembering the story, the skull of one of Pegasus`s descendants was used for the Mari Lwyd.'

Applying Sally Robert Jones's story (provided) as Chamber Theatre

If you draw on the story by Sally Roberts Jones, in order to create a piece of Chamber Theatre, you are supported by her text, which includes clear action and speech.

Let's begin with the event. In this case, it is the event of Herbert FitzMatthew's death, and the events leading up to it. We use the text provided as the central narrative to be told by the narrator /s of our choice.

If we consider that early step of 'Who is telling the story or account?' we have a number of people to select from including,

- FitzMatthew himself
- one of his soldiers,
- Pegasus, his horse,
- one of the Welshmen on the slope of the hill
- a farmer of the time
- one of the sons of Pegasus

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

- a farmer today who discovers the skull of Pegasus, or who owns a descendent of Pegasus
- a descendent of FitzMatthew as he stands at his memorial stone
- And there will be others you and the children might imagine.

Deciding this, as Heathcote says, causes the children to study the text very closely in order to explore it more deeply. Depending on who is telling the story will dictate where the person is situated when telling the story and to whom they be telling it to and when. Is it in the present? the past? Or the future? for example, a descendent of FitzMatthew at his grave or memorial stone may be telling his son or grandson the story of the event, in 2024. We position the narrator as if in the place at the time we have decided. As they tell the story, others demonstrate the action of the characters and may pick up the story as appropriate, and particularly voice the spoken responses within the text.

If we look at Charles Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol', the omniscient narrator has the power to play many functions, from different viewpoints, an example being the figure of the ghosts from past present and the future, all of whom function as narrators in the text and in the numerous film versions.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

A writing frame to support a group of children creating a piece of Chamber Theatre

Here is a suggested writing frame which may help you and the children to try out this approach, especially if you want the children to focus on text and use drama in a supportive and protective way.

Event.....

Narrator/s Whose point/s of view will the event be told from? Who might recall the event? Who might have heard about the event?

Narrator/s

Is the event going to be told in the past or present tense, or situated in the imagined future?

Time of Telling of the Event.....

Dialogue Which dialogue will you include from the text and which character of the time will say these lines? Where is he/she situated? What is he / or she doing?

Dialogue

.....

REMEMBER

You can include the sounds, explicit and implicit, from the text to build the atmosphere of the narrative.

MYSTERIOUS AFAN CUDD

We hope this approach works well for the children and for you. We would love to hear of any work that happens.

Please do contact us on: contact@calonafan.org



CALON AFAN is a community interest company based in Port Talbot whose mission is to research and share the lesser-known histories of Port Talbot and the Afan Valley.

We're working to put Port Talbot and the Afan Valley on the map for its unique heritage and history.

Image on front cover: [Richard Marshal](#) unhorses [Baldwin Guines](#) at a skirmish before the Battle of Monmouth in 1233. From the *Historia Major* of [Matthew Paris](#), Cambridge, Corpus Christi College Library, vol 2, p. 85. MS 16, fol. 88r

CALON AFAN

Cwmni Buddiant Cymunedol Calon Afan Community Interest Company
2 Brookway Close, Port Talbot, SA12 8EL Rhif y Cwmni/Company number: **15284549**
www.calonafan.org