

Puzzlewood

A Magical Woodland in the Forest of Dean

Fantasy Writing

KEY STAGE 2

Puzzlewood is an ideal environment for all types of creative work based on fantasy.

The landscape is eerie and particularly atmospheric, full of weird and wonderful natural sculptural forms, secret caves, and hidden doorways...endless!

Below are some suggestions for your visit that could be adapted to suit your class.

We strongly recommend that you visit the site before your visit, as there are so many varied opportunities for creative curriculum development.



National Curriculum Programs of Study:

English:

- To have opportunities to write for a range of real purposes and audiences as part of their work across the curriculum.
- To make decisions about the form the writing should take, such as a narrative or a description.
- To understand the skills and processes that are essential for writing: that is, thinking aloud to explore and collect ideas, drafting, and re-reading to check their meaning is clear, including doing so as the writing develops.
- To monitor whether their writing makes sense.
- To draft and write by selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning
- In writing narratives, to consider how authors have developed characters and settings in what pupils have read, listened to or seen performed
- To describe settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to convey character and advance the action
- To select appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning
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This is a suggested plan for using Puzzlewood as inspiration for a fantasy adventure. There are opportunities to develop the setting, characters and the journey through *The Quest*, using the Puzzlewood map and identified locations. (There are many more which could be added during the visit).

There are features in Puzzlewood – e.g. the crocodile – that could be incorporated into the story. Imagine they've been petrified by the wicked character of the plot. The pupils develop their story by moving through the wood, overcoming obstacles with their trusted companions, defeating the evil character and, thus, solving *The Quest*.

Please note that there are also 2 mazes (labyrinths) and a mysterious door (which could lead to another world) at Puzzlewood that could also be used as settings within *The Quest* story.

Prior to the visit:

To be familiar with texts with a fantasy setting – similarities and differences

Create a word bank from books read

To understand the fantasy genre and the traits of its characters

To understand the term 'A Quest' and how to plan a story (story mountain – problem events, climax, resolution)

The Quest

Decide on the hero of the story who will defend Puzzlewood (character study). Any companions?

Decide on the wicked character of the story who wants to destroy Puzzlewood (character study).

Plan ideas for what disaster has befallen Puzzlewood: using some of the amazing natural shapes to suggest characters, what has happened, and why the hero is needed. Why was he/she chosen and how? How did the hero meet up with his trusted companions? What has the wicked character done?

Puzzlewood as the enchanted setting – Visit

Walk around the trail, following the map. Identify features that could be integrated into story, be aware of the atmosphere, look for locations where problems could arise e.g. the stepping stones, other hidden dangers in natural features. Oral work.

Collate, share and organise ideas in *house in woods or story circle*. FOCUS ON SETTING AND ATMOSPHERE. Use this time to decide which obstacles to use and think about the given questions (see attached sheet). Where will you meet the wicked character and how will you defeat it? Role play the dialogue. Emotions of characters, what is the character thinking.

In groups, follow the trail (keeping to the path) to their favoured locations. Write freely and imaginatively, using their notes as they journey to meet and solve each problem. Build tension and excitement.

Describe the final battle and the hero's ultimate victory (don't forget the trusted companions) and saving of Puzzlewood and its inhabitants.

Further writing can be done on site either in a room provided, the garden and the house in the woods.

After the visit:

Write a full, extended story with illustrations and additional text e.g.

- A wanted poster for the evil character
- An advert for the hero
- Map of the area
- Personification of locations e.g. screaming stones, blubbing bridge
- Magic spells (instruction writing)
- A letter home from the hero
- An eye-witness account of one of the incidents
- Interview one of the characters
- Author facts and 'blurb'
- Write a tourism advert for Puzzlewood as a fantasy setting

Write a screenplay. A further short visit to Puzzlewood could be arranged to act out and film a scene from their story.

Puzzlewood is also an ideal location for:

- Acting out scenes from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Macbeth' etc.
- A half day visit to focus on settings and atmosphere.
- To enhance the study of a particular book as Puzzlewood has been used for filming (see website). Tolkein is said to have used the scowles as inspiration for Middle Earth.
- Imaginative writing e.g. faces in the trees.
- Study of dragons
- Poetry – convey an image: simile, rhyme, metaphor, word play.
- Art work – 2D and 3D
- Photography

Helpful site: www.literacyshed.com/the-fantasy-shed

Sample worksheets attached.

Outline for a Quest character profile

Fact File	Example	Notes
Name		
Appearance		
Dwelling Place		
Secret Skills		
Magic Powers		
Diet		
Character Traits		
Worst Deed to Date		

TIME TO THINK..... Think carefully about how you will tackle each of the obstacles on your quest

Obstacle	Things to think about
Poisonous swamps of and the old crone	How will you cross the swamp? What can you smell, hear, see and sense? What will the old crone's riddle be? How will she react when you guess the correct answer?
.....the	What weapon will you use? What does the ogre look like? How does the ogre move and talk? How will he be defeated - death or surrender?
The enchanted forest and the trees of terror	How do you feel as you pass through the forest? What are you thinking? What can you hear, smell, and sense? How do the trees try to capture you?
	How do you feel when you see the mighty? How long do you battle the for? What are you thinking before, during and after the battle?

Risk Assessment for Educational Visits

It is assumed the trip leader and preferably at least one other accompanying staff member will have visited the site and be familiar with the facilities, the layout, the location of phones, toilets, first aid equipment etc. and that all adults accompanying the trip will be briefed before the visit. The party will include a qualified first aider, and carry at least one first aid kit during the visit.

Recommended staff/ pupil ratios: Early years/reception: 1 adult to 4 pupils, KS1: 1 adult to 5 pupils, KS2 : 1 adult to 6 pupils, KS3 1 adult to 8-10 pupils.

Hazard	Risk level	Action to reduce/prevent risk
Transportation to/from school	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of reputable coach company. • Children to remain seated at <i>all</i> times • Seat belts to be worn at <i>all</i> times
Uneven paths – slippery when wet	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate footwear – trainers or shoes with good grip • Children to walk at all times • Danger of tripping
Steep drops	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reiterate the importance of walking (not running) • Keep to the designated paths
Unforeseen incident with children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities managed in accordance with abilities of staff and children • Medical conditions and behavioural details of children known to staff • SEND children and those with medical conditions assigned to individual staff. Staff member to keep and administer medication if needed as per parents' instructions
Major accident	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure mobile signal, or know location of nearest landline phone
Separation from group	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular head counts. Establish procedure to follow if a child goes missing. • Children briefed on what to do if they become separated
Adverse weather conditions	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and adults all wear suitable protective clothing • Sun protection – hat and sunscreen, adequate drinking water in hot weather • In strong winds – beware of windfall (branches)
Child safety	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder of expected behaviour around unfamiliar adults and terrain • Regular headcounts in public places

General rules to minimize risks

Car Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches to park on the gravelled area. • Beware of moving traffic in the car park area.
Wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone MUST stay on the paths at ALL times. • No running. • Children must stay with adults and adults must ensure this. • Some steps and paths are uneven so care should be taken at all times. • Use hand rails on the steps (where available). Some of the steps are steep. Take care. • Some plants in the wood are prickly e.g. holly, or sting (nettles) • In wet weather the paths and steps can become slippery; take additional care. • Be aware of low branches. • Walk slowly over the bridges. Be aware that some people can be apprehensive about heights.
Wood Puzzle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No running. • Look out for some uneven surfaces, low ceilings and steps. • Children under 7 years should be accompanied by an adult.
Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read all the signs about the animals. • Animals can bite. • Do not enter fields or pens. • Always wash hands after touching the animals. Washing facilities are available in the toilet block. • Some children may be allergic to animals/hay/straw etc.
Play Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The equipment can get slippery in wet weather. • Ensure adult supervision of children in your care. • Check the suitability of the equipment for the children in your specific group.

