

CINDERELLA AND THE GLASS CEILING -

Is it ever too early to start planning for your future?



JAYNE NORTH
RCDP REPORTS ON
HER WORK WITH
EARLY CAREERS
EDUCATION

For decades now careers professionals have enthusiastically experimented and dipped their toes in the welcoming warm water of career-related learning in primary education, acutely aware of how it can bring the learning to life and increase engagement through making explicit the links between the content of the national curriculum and pupils aspirations and subsequent progression.

I myself as a fledgling careers adviser in the early 90s delivered careers education lessons to enthusiastic 8 to 10 year olds, lessons designed to broaden their knowledge of the world of work, challenge limiting beliefs and raise aspirations using quizzes, role play and no end of random props including my very own wedding tiara and veil.

Evidence of the benefits of starting early with Careers Education

There is a raft of research and literature which cites the benefit of early careers education; the 60s saw Erikson identify that children under 10 years are keen to use their initiative and learn new things making it an ideal age to explore experiential work-related learning.

Career exploration and experimentation at an early age are also advocated for by Super (1957) through his 'self-concept theories' and Gottfredsons work (1981) looking at a child's development in relation to various factors both externally through social development and internally through increased awareness of their own interests, abilities and values. Law (1996) corroborates this through his *Career Learning Theory* identifying that children through a range of high-order behaviours are able to develop more autonomous decision-making skills.

KS2 has been identified as a vital phase of child development when careers education can play an important role due to high levels of curiosity and engagement which can be capitalised upon. Pupils are eager to learn about the world of work and develop their understanding of self and their own future aspirations. Erikson (1965) found that pupils between 6 and 10 years are more receptive to challenging their limiting beliefs and to questioning stereotypes in the workplace through active learning and their predisposition towards risk taking and using their initiative.

Developing resilience and a growth mindset through Careers Education

With the explicit knowledge of the benefits of early Careers Education alongside the topical Growth Mindset (Dweck, C. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*) and the current universal acceptance that resilience and psychological wellbeing are prerequisites of success, I have developed *FairyTwists* an innovative immersive storytelling resource for Primary age pupils.

FairyTwists have been written to support the embedding of literacy skills and dovetail with SMSC and PSHE and support schools to meet their statutory duties:

'Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.'

FairyTwists are a practical resource of 6 pro social, modern stories loosely based upon traditional fairytales, which support KS1 and KS2 staff to improve literacy through immersive storytelling.

Immersive storytelling actively engages pupils in the telling and role playing of the story which strengthens engagement and supports the development of the pupils' spoken language. A huge evidence base, <http://jcpe.wmwikis.net/file/view/miller.pdf> and www.academia.edu/5587953/The_Impact_of_the_Storytelling_Curriculum_on_Literacy_Development_for_Children_Aged_Six_to_Seven_and_their_Teachers

shows the impact of oral storytelling on children's writing and how through investment in oracy and the development of verbal skills e.g. talk4writing, www.talk4writing.co.uk/about leads to significant improvements in writing.

The *FairyTwists* workshops have received positive testimonials from staff and pupils at both KS1 and KS2;

"Our pupils are still talking about the FairyTwists workshop, they relished the opportunity to have a go at performing and storytelling and the puppets provided a fun way to do this. We are expecting to see improvements in writing as pupils have been so enthusiastic talking about their learning this will transfer into their written work."
Unity Academy, KS2 Lead



"FairyTwists are brilliant at getting every pupil involved, the session was fast paced and fun. Everything included was relevant to the world our pupils live in and so learning was maximised."

Trinity St Peters Primary School, Deputy Headteacher

FairyTwists are particularly relevant for pupils who are vulnerable, performing below expected levels, have special educational needs, including autism spectrum disorder and dyslexia etc and/or who may disengage from learning. National Strategies research shows a 39% dip in progress at KS3 and the Ofsted report *Key Stage 3 – the wasted years?* cites transition arrangements as contributing to this dip in progress. FairyTwists have been developed in response and the resource will contribute to effectively preparing pupils for transition.

Recently a team of qualified careers professionals and teachers have taken the *FairyTwists* resource to several schools in the North West and evaluation and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

"FairyTwists is an inventive way to encourage children to consider a range of moral issues. It encouraged our children to think, discuss and appreciate others' point of view. A highly worthwhile resource to support the aims of the primary PSHE & C curriculum, many thanks".

Headteacher Sandie Lineton, Kingsmeadow Primary School

The *FairyTwist* stories address many complex and challenging issues faced by children at KS1 and KS2

including challenging stereotypes in the workplace and raising aspirations.

"The positive key messages, including the topical growth mindset were delivered through an engaging and interactive approach. The 'FairyTwist' made the children think in a considered way and provoked a lot of purposeful discussion. The children really enjoyed role playing the story which was fun and relevant". Mrs Adkins, Year 6 Teacher

Enthusiastic feedback from the pupils included:

"Everything was very positive. It taught me to never give up and to believe in myself". Lewis, Year 6 pupil

"I've learnt the magic word...yet!" Sam, Year 6 pupil

"I liked that it wasn't just a normal fairy-tale - it was useful". Harry, Year 6 pupil

"The careers quiz was great - I really liked it!" Matthew, Year 6 pupil

If you would like to know more about how *FairyTwists* can support your PSHE/SMSC Curriculum, contribute to embedding literacy skills and facilitate development of a growth mindset and resilience please see www.careernorth.co.uk or contact info@careernorth.co.uk

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Jayne North RCDP is the Managing Director of Career North Ltd