

Curwen Gets Creative!

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Shakespeare Schools Festival

By Mrs Clements

What an evening we had! Back in November, Curwen's esteemed cast from year 5/6 performed Shakespeare's timeless story of *Julius Caesar* for the Shakespeare Schools Festival - where young people across the United Kingdom took to the stage for a unifying evening of live theatre.

Coram Shakespeare Schools Foundation is one of the world's largest youth drama

festivals where a series of abridged Shakespeare plays were performed by local schools across the borough on a professional stage to a sold-out paying audience at The Barking Broadway Theatre.

With just 6 weeks of dedicated lunchtime rehearsals and teaching Mrs Clements the ways of Tik Tok dances, our modern-day rendition of *Julius Caesar* was

an absolute hit with the audience and festival coordinators, and we cannot be prouder of their achievements!

Understanding and analysing such a complex script - that is virtually in another language - was no mean feat and, not only that, the skills possessed by these young actors to relay that understanding of emotions to an audience was admirable. (cont. p2)

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Their oracy and inference skills have flourished and I hope they are able to utilise all the skills learnt in their school life and beyond.

It was an absolute privilege to see the professionalism and dedication to being an actor and performer and I really hope that this experience will stay with them for life.

Even as a reminder that hard work pays off; nerves are a tool for greatness and that anything is possible if you set your mind to it and go for it!

A few of the cast from 6C wanted to share some of their thoughts about what they loved about the whole process of putting on such a performance:

Tatyana described how she loves the journey: "It's great to think about how you start the

process and then see yourself at the end, when you're on stage acting in front of the audience."

Diego describes how he had a fun time with the cast: "There were so many funny moments that I'll remember forever!"

Laila loved working with her peers: "You think that you know the people you are with, but you really do get to know the cast properly when putting on a show like this."

Finally, Laiba explained how she liked learning how to put on a Shakespearean play: Working with props like we did was not like anything we had done before. It made acting *Julius Caesar* really interesting for the actors and for the audience."

Laiba and Stephanie share what it was like to be one of the cast in their article, The Shakespearean World, below.

The Shakespearean World

By Laiba and Stephanie (Year 6)

What's it like to be a Shakespearean actor?

Very busy! Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday lunchtime we rehearsed for the performance. We have to get used to the language of the play and using many different props. As the performance nears, rehearsals become more frequent. It's a real commitment. As a Shakespearean, we felt very important and became very popular, too!

What happens on performance day?

We had rehearsals all morning at school, before having lunch and setting off to the theatre. When we arrived, we were shown to our dressing room where we got to relax with the

rest of the cast for a while. We then had to go through a tech rehearsal, to make sure all of the lighting and other technical bits ran smoothly. This is when all of the photographs were taken, too.



Being part of the Shakespeare performance was amazing. If you love acting and, of course, having fun, then this is for you. What are you waiting for? Start practising your acting skills and get ready for auditioning!



Spotlight on... Drama!

By The Curwen Team

Children at Curwen regularly have opportunities to engage in drama in lessons and experiences outside of the classroom. According to The Arts Council, “high quality drama education” helps to develop “skills and understanding through discussion, rehearsal and refinement, verbal, physical and written expression, and regular opportunities for pupils to share their work.” We couldn’t agree more!

Drama in the Curwen Curriculum helps children to develop all of their Curwen Core Skills: communication, empathy, invocation, leadership, reflection, resilience, teamwork and strive for success.

Here’s what some of the year 6 think about the importance of drama at Curwen:

“Drama makes you more confident and helps you get to know people better. It’s so enjoyable; you get to pretend to be someone you’re not and express yourself in different ways.”

“Drama also helps you to develop your Curwen Core Skills, especially communication. In fact, when you’re acting or doing drama, you are able to use all of the Core Skills. It’s such a lot of fun.”



Diwali at the Barbican

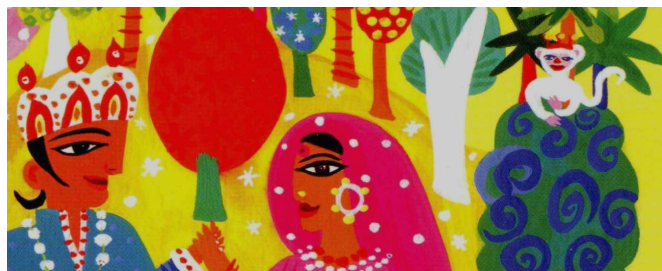


By Anushka (Year 6)

We visited the Barbican Theatre to take part in a Diwali celebration. The ancient story of Prince Rama and Princess Sita was told by the London Symphony Orchestra and is a story celebrated by many people every year during Diwali.

The wonderful tale was retold using orchestral favourites alongside music using traditional Indian instruments.

They found small ways for us, the audience,



to join in. We pretended to be a monkey army and we sang an Indian song that we all know called *Jai ho*. It was an amazing experience!

By the EYFS Team

In November, Nursery and Reception classes had the great pleasure of watching Little Angel Theatre perform 'WOW! Said The Owl.' Children were enthralled by the story of the little owl that was determined to stay awake to see the wonderful colours that

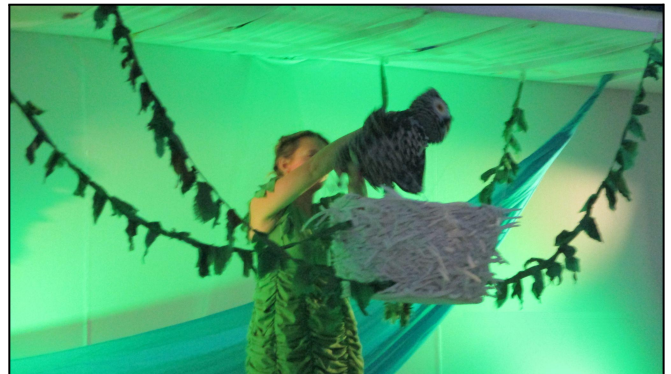


daytime brings.

Children were thrilled to meet Owl

The performance was thoroughly enjoyed by children and staff. Miss Sawyer, AHT for EYFS, said, "It is great to be able to provide the children with an opportunity to experience an in-house theatre show in a setting where they are familiar. Seeing the children's engagement and curiosity outside the classroom allows us as practitioners to build on their interests and develop their listening skills. The sensory use of colours and light excited the children and they were able to make links to what they saw."

Following the performance, children discussed the experience and their learning with teachers, with many commenting on the changing colours and the animals they could see.



Children loved the changing colours

Sajal, from PM nursery, was thrilled to see the colours, saying "Everything is blue! The water is blue!" Maariya, from AM nursery commented on the changing landscape, saying "Now it's yellow, like the sun!" Zayena, also from AM nursery, was delighted to see the animals, commenting "The owl is flying. I like the red butterfly. It flies too!"



Children enjoyed watching the performance

Creativity and Cultural Learning at Curwen

By The Curwen Team

We're sure you would agree that there are many benefits of learning to read and write, and understanding mathematics. You'd also likely be able to list many positives of learning about science and humanities subjects, such as history, geography and religious education.



However, when we look at culture and creativity, perhaps the importance of these parts of the school curriculum are not as obvious. No doubt you would suggest it is fun for children to learn about art and music, but there are many more positive aspects to arts subjects.

So, what do we mean by cultural learning? Basically, it's active engagement with the creation of our arts and heritage. Belonging to such a richly diverse community presents Curwen with many opportunities for learning in this way.

Cultural learning involves both learning through culture and learning about culture. Learning in this way involves critical thinking, creativity, and developing original ideas and actions. Children learn through listening, playing, seeing, watching and interacting, performing, devising, designing and composing, making, writing and doing.

With all of this in mind, our children are excited to share the creativity and cultural learning that takes place in school (and how much we value it in our curriculum) through the 'Curwen Gets Creative!' newsletter.



2SA perform the story of The Great Fire of London

Sing Along this Christmas!



Music is a much-loved lesson in the Curwen timetable. Not only is it a lot of fun, learning about music and taking part in performances also helps children to grow their language, develop motor skills and emotional intelligence, as well as those valuable teamwork skills.

KS2 children are thrilled to be able to share their performances of festive favourites.



4A singing *Merry Christmas, Everyone!*

Year 4, 5 and 6 have also been busy putting together performances to showcase their work with Mr Murdoch. The children have worked hard this term learning to play a variety of instruments in their music lessons: ukulele, guitar and keyboard.



5T dressed for the occasion!

Make sure you ask your child to log on to their Google Classroom so you can watch their class performance.



Curwen Choir Perform at All Hallows Church

By The Curwen Team

On 5th December, Curwen's choir performed at the Marsh McLennon Christmas service. They were fantastic! The C.E.O of Marsh McLennon, Chris Lay, was in attendance and he was very impressed by the children's performance.

Special thanks go to Helen Lam (Curwen's Chair of Governors) for the invitation, Maria Gorman, who facilitated the trip, our fabulous parent helpers and of course our wonderful children and staff!!

The children found the experience to be very rewarding.

Aisha (5PB) said it was "fun and a great experience to sing in front of a large audience."

Phoebe-Grace (5PB) agreed saying, "It was lovely to get such nice feedback from the audience."

Maria (5PB) explained how she loves learning new songs even though when she first started choir she felt nervous: "You experience fear at first, but you get better, more confident and braver."

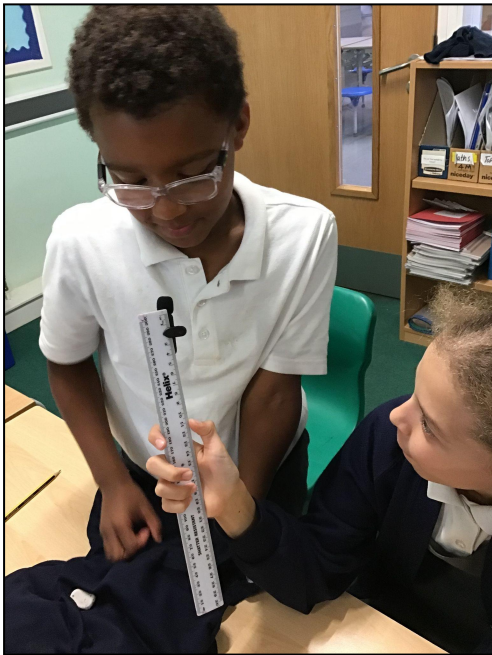
Clearly, the children love choir and having the opportunity to sing in front of an audience. The children all agree that to have a great choir, there needs to be a great leader. Aisha summed it up best: "Mr Boyd is an amazing choir teacher!"



The Curwen Podcast

By The School Council

The School Council are always looking for ways to engage with the school community. Their latest initiative is The Curwen Podcast. The podcast was produced by the pupils themselves (helped initially by Ms Lam), with children interviewing, recording, editing and producing the final cut.



Antonia (5C), who took a lead role in producing the Podcast said, “I loved the experience of learning how to create the recording. It was the first time I’ve ever worked with a team to record and produce a podcast. The experience really helped me to develop my leadership skills more, as well as my communication skills. It was really fun bringing the whole thing together.”

In the first podcast, you’ll meet the School Council and learn about why children love Curwen. Year 4 shares fun facts about learning

in school, Year 5 tells us all about what they want to be when they grow up and Year 6 shares their favourite memories of Curwen.



The School Council also interviewed Mrs Mansfield, asking some interesting questions about Curwen and about her career as a teacher.

The second podcast went live last week. Antonia explained what we can look forward to in this episode: “There are interviews with Mr Smale the Shakespeare cast and Pupil Parliament. Also, years 1-6 share their thoughts on their favourite subjects and why they love Curwen. There is also an interview with the School Council.,

Look at the school website under the ‘Our Community’ tab or scan the QR code to access the podcast.



Scan here to access Podcasts

Sculpture in the City

By The Curwen Team

Some of our year 5 and 6 children had the amazing opportunity to participate in the Sculpture in the City programme - the first Newham school to take part! The children attended 4 workshops over two days where they explored various art pieces and sculptures within the City of London.

The children also drew their own skylines from a high rise building and made their own collages. The final workshop ended with them working collaboratively to make their own sculptures incorporating their artwork from previous workshops.



The children attending the event had a great time. Anushka (6K) explains: "I enjoyed all of the activities we took part in, especially using glass to trace our own version of architecture. I also really enjoyed looking at the different types of architecture and sculpture around the city, things I'd never noticed before."

Luna (6A) agrees: "I enjoyed seeing unique sculptures that I didn't realise were there."



"I have been many times to these places and didn't realise they were sculptures! I really think I was able to develop my communication skills during the workshops, especially when working with my team to build our sculpture in the final activity."

Rimsha also loved the teamwork aspect of the activities; "I loved working with people to build sculptures. The photography activity was also a lot of fun!"



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!

By The KS1 and EYFS Team

It wouldn't be Christmas at Curwen without our annual EYFS and KS1 Christmas performances. This year, Nursery and Reception classes performed the Nativity story to a full house and were, as always, absolutely fantastic!



RdR, RC and AM Nursery perform the Nativity story to a full house

Year 1 and Year 2 also excelled themselves with their interpretation of the Nativity story in *Countdown to Christmas*.



Three kings visit Baby Jesus in a manger, in the KS1 performance.

It's truly inspirational to see children challenging themselves to speak, act and sing for such a large audience.

We had some lovely comments from parents, carers and visitors:

Mrs R, Reception parent - "Such a lovely, lively performance. Great to see the children build their confidence."

Ms B, Reception parent - "It was so well organised! I loved the inclusivity - not a single child was left out."

Ms B, Year 1 parent - "Great show and so engaging and creative. Well done everyone!"

Mrs A, Year 2 parent - "A very good performance. Great for the children to build their confidence...and to see the children enjoy the singing."



RM, RMC and PM Nursery perform the nativity story to a full house

Be sure to have a look at the school website to see more pictures of the Christmas performances!