

From Page to Screen Media Unit for Year 7

Lorna Cassie, Welland Park Community College



The Context

Last Summer, Welland Park and Kibworth High Schools worked on transition between KS3 and 4 with their Upper School, Robert Smythe, concentrating on media. This is an important area of GCSE with a piece of coursework from the English paper dedicated to media and it is often taught as a separate subject as well. In their discussions it was decided that the understanding of the way the media works and the development of a language to describe the media would be useful activities in High schools so that when pupils started their GCSE work on media they would already have a good understanding of the way in which it worked.

Together the staff of the three schools developed a transition unit for KS3/4 which has now worked successfully for two years.

The staff at Welland decided to extend their work on media and the following unit of work was devised for use with Year 7 pupils, linking their knowledge of two popular films, 'Lord of the Rings' and 'Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets' with their understanding of the texts. The key aim was to look at the differences between a written and a film text but incorporated into this was the revisiting of some writing styles.

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Resources

Books

The Two Towers by J R R Tolkien

- Description of Ents. p468
- Chapter 4 “Treebeard”.
- Rohan and Edoras. p495

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets by J K Rowling

- Gilderoy Lockhart p32, 71, 76

DVDs

The Two Towers (Special Extended DVD Edition)

Part 1

- Scene 13: Merry and Pippin meet Treebeard
- Scenes 20, 23: Rohan and Edoras

Appendices 3. Part 3 The Journey Continues...

- Building and Designing Middle Earth.
- “Weta Workshop” “Designing Middle Earth”
- Gollum “The Taming of Smeagol”

The Fellowship of the Ring (Special Extended DVD Edition)

The Appendices Part 1. From Book to Vision.

- Visualizing the Story - “Storyboards and Pre-Viz. Making words into images”

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

- Scenes 6,11: Gilderoy Lockhart
- Scene 15: Quidditch match

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2.

The Lessons

Week One Treebeard and Gollum

<p>Give pupils short sections of The Two Towers (book) describing Ents. (E.g. p468) Pupils sketch what they think Treebeard will look like.</p>	<p>Teacher reads whole of chapter 4 "Treebeard". Pupils note down how Ents: - Move/Speak/Their background/attitudes and feelings etc.</p>	<p>Watch scene 13 of The Two Towers DVD (where Merry and Pippin meet Treebeard).</p>	<p>Comment on differences and similarities between book/DVD/their sketches.</p>
<p>Watch DVD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Part 3 Appendices 3 The Journey Continues. □ Building and Designing Middle Earth. □ "Weta Workshop" <p>(Focus on designing Treebeard)</p>			
<p>Introduce task. Pupils will write an article for a film magazine explaining how Gollum was translated from the book to the big screen.</p>	<p>Watch DVD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Part 3 Appendices 3 The Journey Continues. □ Gollum □ "The Taming of Smeagol" (40mins) <p>Pupils answer questions about the importance of Gollum and the techniques used to bring him to life.</p>		

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2.

The Lessons

Week Two Gollum and Rohan

Recap task. What key points will need to be included in the article?	Explain writing features for explanation an text.	Go over DVD Qs from previous lesson.	Explain structure of article using OHT of writing frame.	
	Guided writing session. Teacher supports least able.			Finish for homework
Explain to pupils they will be describing Rohan and Edoras.	Watch DVD <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Part 3 Appendices 3 The Journey Continues.□ Building and Designing Middle Earth.□ “Designing Middle Earth” (40 mins) Pupils jot down notes about Edoras so they can describe it next lesson.			

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The Lessons

Week Three Rohan and Quidditch

10 top tips for descriptive writing.	Watch short sections on Rohan and Edoras from The Two Towers DVD. (e.g. Scene 20, 23)	Describe Edoras using what has just been watched. Teacher could display stills from DVD.	Listen to 2 or 3 successful descriptions.	Finish description.
Teacher reads description of Rohan and Edoras from the book. (p495)	Pupils reread and redraft their descriptions.		Pupils peer assess their versions using a Marking ladder.	
Outline task and criteria for writing instructions.	Watch Quidditch match from HP. (scene15)	In pairs write instructions on how to play Quidditch. 2 or 3 pairs write their instructions on OHT.	Look at examples on OHTs.	

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The Lessons

Week Four Designing own Harry Potter Game and Gilderoy Lockhart

Recap main points for instruction writing.	Discuss ideas for designing their own game in HP world.	Design own game. Draw annotated picture with instructions.	Pupils explain to the person next to them how to play their game.	Finish for homework.
Teacher reads a description of Gilderoy Lockhart from the book.	Pupils read other extracts about Gilderoy from the book.	Complete first half of comparative worksheet using book extracts.	Discuss what they have learnt about Gilderoy Lockhart from the book.	
What do they remember from the film about Gilderoy Lockhart? Why would there be differences between the book and the film?	View Gilderoy scenes on DVD (scenes 6,11)	Complete comparative worksheet.	Which did pupils prefer and why?	

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2.

The Lessons

Week Five Gilderoy Lockhart comparative writing

Criteria for comparative writing	Teacher models comparative paragraph	Shared writing of essay paragraph.	Pupils write their own paragraph.	Plan remainder of essay
Write comparative essay				
Write comparative essay				

Week Six Storyboarding

Outline of storyboarding task.	<u>Watch DVD</u> <u>The Fellowship of the Ring</u> The Appendices Part 1 From Book to vision. <ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Visualizing the Story□ Storyboards and Pre-Viz Making words into images. (15mins) (Pupils could also view "Early Storyboards")			Choose extract from a book of their choice to storyboard.
Teacher explains the importance of shot choices.	Teacher uses an extract to model storyboarding.	Pupils select 10 shots from their extract to sketch out in rough.	Look at 2 or 3 successful rough copies.	
Complete storyboard				

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3.

Differentiation

The following materials were produced to support the different needs of pupils within the class for each of the writing tasks.

Gollum: From Book to Screen

The Two Towers is a film about

Gollum was once a hobbit like creature but

He is important to the story because

When making the film, it was important to make Gollum as realistic as possible because

The actor Andy Serkis was chosen because

Two main film techniques were used. Key Frame animation scans parts of _____ into the computer, which are then moved by an animator. The actors act their scenes twice, once _____ present and once without _____. The model can be animated into the space left by him.

Key Frame animation is very good technique because it can animate very delicate parts of the body like

_____. It also means that for some of the time the actors have someone to act with which improves _____.

The other technique used is motion capture. Andy Serkis wore _____.

On the suit there were sensors, which fed information about _____ directly into a computer. This moves a model of Gollum on the computer screen.

This is a very good technique because it is very fast and it captures the performance of the actor.

Eventually they decided they had to choose

_____ because _____

The combination of different teams has made this into such a good film. You should go and see it because

The best bit is

The Taming of Smeagol

1. Why was it so important to get Gollum exactly right?
2. Why did they decide to use an actor to portray Gollum rather than relying on computer effects?
3. What is key frame animation?
4. What is motion capture performance?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of both?
6. Which did they decide to use?

Marking Ladder for Instructions, including Self Assessment

<u>Writing Instructions Structure</u>		
	Pupil	Teacher
Statement of what is to be achieved		
List of materials/equipment		
Sequenced steps		
Diagrams/illustrations		
<u>Writing instructions Language features</u>		
Imperatives		
Chronological order		
Temporal connectives		
Focus on <u>general</u> human agents		
Doing/action clauses		
Short clear sentences		
Pupil comments		
Teacher comments		

Quidditch Information:

Quidditch is the most popular pastime at Hogwarts. Every student should know the rules of the game as it is a very important aspect of Hogwarts life.

Quidditch is played with two teams.

Each team consists of seven players:

Chaser: There are three chasers per teams. The Chasers' job is to pass the Quaffle amongst each other around the field to score goals.

Keeper: There is only one per team. The Keeper guards the goal posts to keep the other team from scoring.

Beater: There are two per team. The Beaters use a stick to knock the Bludgers away from their own teammates and towards the other team's players.

Seeker: There is only one per team. The Seeker's job is to fly around until he/she spots the Golden Snitch. Catching the Golden Snitch ends the game.

There are four balls in play at all times. The balls are divided into three types:

Quaffle: This ball is red. The ball is about the size of a Muggle soccer ball. This is the ball used for scoring goals worth 10 points a piece.

Bludger: There are two of these, both are black. The Bludger is smaller than a Quaffle. The Bludgers fly around rudely attempting to knock players off their brooms. It is the job of the Beaters to guard their teammates from these vicious balls.

Golden Snitch: Only one, and like it's name, the ball is gold. This is easily the most important ball of the game. Tiny and very fast, this winged ball is very hard to spot and catch. When the snitch is caught, the game ends. The snitch is worth 150 points.

How to play Quidditch

The team

1
3
2
1

The balls

1
2
1

- 1) First the golden snitch is set free. It is**

- 2) The seeker's job is to**

- 3) Then the bludgers are set free. They**

- 4) The beaters**

- 5) The chasers catch the quaffle and try to**

6) The keeper's job is to

7) When a goal is scored

8) Finally the game ends when

9) The winner is

Gilderoy Lockhart Comparative Chart

	How are we introduced to him?	Appearance	Personality	How does he act/ behave?	How do others react to him?
Book					
Film					

Are there differences between the book and film versions of Gilderoy Lockhart?

- Gilderoy Lockhart is an important character in both versions of Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets because
- This essay aims to
- In the book we are first introduced to Lockhart when
- The first time we see Lockhart in the film is when
- In the book Gilderoy Lockhart's appearance is described as
- However, in the film Lockhart
- In the book Gilderoy's personality could be described as conceited. He is this when
- He is also vain
- In the film he is also
- In the book, when we see the book signing, Lockhart acts as if
- In the film version he
- Other teachers think Lockhart is
- Pupils think he is
- Some women think Lockhart is
- In the film Lockhart is
- In conclusion
- I prefer

4.

Examples of Work

There are three examples of the Gollum essay here, a supported piece, middle ability and extracts from a more able pupil's work. Also there are two of the descriptive pieces of writing on Rohan.

Gollum: From Book to Screen

The Two Towers is a film about two hobbits called Frodo and Sam, who are on their way to destroy an evil ring. Their friends are called Merry and Pippin and have been captured by Orcs, who are killing machines built by Saruman to destroy mankind.

Gollum was once a hobbit like creature but he is possessed by the ring. He has an evil side to him which wants to kill Frodo and Sam, but the good Gollum likes them and is helping them on their way to destroy the ring.

He is important to the story because he is the main character who is trying to get his little hands on the ring so he can live forever.

When making the film, it was important to make Gollum as realistic as possible because he is one of the main characters and he is mostly on screen. They had done two hundred drawings before getting Gollum perfect and if they didn't get him realistic it would ruin The Two Towers and The Return of the King.

The actor Andy Serkis was chosen because he can make a perfect voice for Gollum and he is very good at crawling on his hands and knees and throwing himself about.

Two main film techniques were used. Key Frame animation scans and sculptures of Gollum into the computer, which are then moved by an animator. The problem was it took too long. The actors act their scenes twice, once with Gollum (Andy Serkis) on the scene, then Frodo and Sam had to act without him so they had to pretend he was there with them.

It was a very good technique because it had a lot of detail.

The other technique used is motion capture. Andy Serkis wore a blue suit and on the suit there were sensors which sensed everything Andy did.

This moves a model of Gollum on the computer screen doing everything Andy Serkis was doing in the suit..

This is a very good technique because if the movements had not been done on the computer, they could not have seen the character doing the movements properly.

Eventually they decided they had to choose a combination of both techniques, so that it would look excellent and the moves were very good when they put them all together, which made a superb character.

The combination of different teams has made this into a brilliant film.

The Making of Gollum

The Two Towers is a film about a boy who is taking an evil ring to a place where he and his friend can destroy it. A strange creature helps them and shows them the way. This creature used to be a hobbit. A hobbit is a creature that is small and man like, they have big feet. But this creature has changed into a small skinny thing that greed possessed. He has been drained by the evil powers. Gollum has two people in his mind: Smeagol, who was the hobbit. He is good and Gollum who is the creature. He is bad. Sometimes Gollum and Smeagol argue. Andy Serkis is the actor of Gollum and does the voice. Gollum is important to the story because if he didn't look right he wouldn't look possessed or drained over the ring. Making the film, Gollum had to look realistic because he used to be a hobbit and if he wasn't realistic you wouldn't believe in him. Andy Serkis was chosen for the part because he had the perfect voice and acted on all fours and was really good.

They chose an actor instead of a computer animation because it's easy for the other actors to work with a person instead of pretending there was someone there. Andy was ideal because he is a brilliant rock climber and doesn't mind getting hurt. In the film Gollum crawls and scrabbles over rocks and gets thrown onto them. Andy gets a very sore throat because he talks funny all the time, so the organisers invented Gollum Juice, which is hot water, lemon, honey and ginger. This helps Andy straight away.

Key Frame Animation was a big important part of making Gollum. Key frame animation is where they make a sculpture of Gollum and scan it on the computer. Then Andy Serkis makes different expressions and they scan his expressions onto Gollum's face. This is a very slow technique as they have to do every frame one by one. But it is a very effective and clever technique.

There was a second technique called motion capture. This is where Andy has a blue skin tight, lycra body suit on. The suit has sensors on all of Andy's joints. This work is done in a big hall with cameras on the walls and ceilings. The cameras are connected to a computer which transfer Andy's movement and detail onto Gollum. Everything Andy does, Gollum does. This is extremely clever, and amazing and realistic!!

They are both the techniques to make the film and it brought them lots of cash! The combination of both teams working together has made The Two Towers a brilliant money making film.

Gollum: From Book to Screen

(Extracts from essay)

...Key frame animation is the old fashioned way of animation, and it takes a very long time. Firstly 2D sketches are done until the picture is right. Then,, these are turned into sculptures made out of clay. For Gollum they did around 200 sketches and made about 100 sculptures. These sculptures are then scanned into the computer. To then move the character, in this case Gollum, they have to be moved frame by frame, which takes a very long time. Also with using Key Frame animation, subtle movements can be missed. These can be slight things, like when a head turns. Although these can be put into Key Frame animation, it takes a very long time. The scenes had to be acted twice. The first time Andy would act with the other actors and interact with objects and scenery. The second time Andy wouldn't be there and Gollum would be animated digitally. An advantage of using Key Frame is that the animators can put a lot of detail into the character being animated. A disadvantage is that it takes a very long time and a lot of hard work.

The other main type of animation used to create Gollum was Motion Capture. Motion Capture is cheaper and faster than Key Frame animation. For the Motion Capture, Andy Serkis had to wear a tight blue suit which had small sensors where his joints were. Then special cameras all around him read his movement, transferring it to the computer. The skeleton on the computer could be moved as Andy moved. This method is cheap and fast because if a scene is wrong it can be re-done very easily..... The main disadvantages of using Motion Capture are that not all of the scenes can be acted like when Gollum climbs down a vertical cliff, in which case Key Frame animation is used. The other disadvantage of Motion Capture is that it only picks up skeleton movement and not details like fingers, toes and facial expressions.

... All of the work that went into creating Gollum, really made a big impact on the film. They had succeeded in making Gollum perfect, and although many people look at it as a great digital achievement, which it was, so much of the hard work came from Andy Serkis. So much so that lots of people thought he should have received an Oscar for his work, and I feel inclined to agree. He, and The Lord of the Rings team, really brought Gollum to life.

The Golden Hall at Edoras

Excellent vocabulary/ Colours/ Mood/ Atmosphere/ Senses/ Detail

Edoras is the capital of Rohan, and home to its monarch, King Theoden. Edoras is situated on the peak of a hill, a bleak and windswept place, and in the middle lies the house of the King, The Golden Hall.

Rohan is based on some Saxon, Norse and Celtic ideas, including its decoration. The people of Rohan love their horses and this is emphasised by the decoration of the stables and The Golden Hall, both of which are very elaborate.

At the entrance of The Golden Hall is a huge golden sun, directly above the great wooden doors. The real sun reflects off it and it gives out light, illuminating the realm of Rohan. Also the roof of the Golden Hall is thatched with golden wheat, giving it a very authentic rustic look.

The hall is covered with delicate, detailed motifs of horses and intertwining lines. These lines twist and curl around the walls, pillars and arches of The Golden Hall. Most of these exquisite designs are of Celtic origin. Some of them simply plait together, whereas others wind around each other and create some very intricate patterns. The building is made of timber but is held together with bronze, iron and gold, used to decorate and strengthen.

The Golden Hall has been described in the book as 'a place of half light and shadows, the gloom accentuated by the smoke from the open fire and ancient tapestries hung upon the walls'. This shows that the atmosphere is rather eerie and it's not a jolly place. It is as if it is a world within the cold grip of sadness and loneliness mixed together.

On both the inside and outside of The Golden Hall are hundreds of horse motifs and carvings. All of these carvings are very intricate and detailed. Also many of the old, faded and moth-eaten tapestries in the hall display pictures of horses, in green, red, blue, white and gold hand-dyed fabrics. One of these tapestries features the story of Leod, the tamer of wild horses, who was thrown by a white foal and died from striking his head against a rock.

The inside of The Golden Hall is in many ways even more elaborate than the outside. Yet it has a musty smell to it, mixed with the scent of smoke from the open fire. The hall has high ceilings, covered with grand arches and supported by ancient beams and towering pillars, all of which are made more beautiful by the interwoven Celtic patterns, embossed in gold. Also the marble floors were decorated with leaves and twisting lines. The Golden Hall echoes with voices and footsteps of the past as the wind whistles through unfurling silken banners and billowing smoke from the huge fireplace.

The Golden Hall at Edoras

Senses/ Vocabulary/ Detail/ Colours/ Vary your sentences

On entering the great hall of Rohan, the first thing I noticed was the beauty and splendour of it. Even if I didn't know that this was the hall of the great King Theoden, I would certainly be able to tell that it belonged to a king. The atmosphere inside was like that of a cathedral that is empty, and a morgue that is lonely and full. There is too much atmosphere in the hall, so much that you constantly felt that you were drowning.

My eyes fixed on a glint of gold at the end of the hall. As I approached it I saw that it was a magnificent throne made purely out of gold, but for the cushions. On the arms were identical models of horses. On the back were Celtic patterns. The throne itself was indeed big enough to seat even the tallest of men. But when sat in by the smallest of children would somehow not dwarf them but it would not change in shape or appearance, but the child would become bigger and stronger to fill the throne.

From a distance, the Golden Hall of Edoras' roof looked as if it were thatched with gold (which is how the hall got its name). In fact the roof is thatched with large amounts of fresh wheat. But this would also mean that the roof would have to be re-thatched very often so that it retained its beauty.

I let my eyes wander for what felt like an eternity, looking closely at anything of interest until I realised that I had missed in my observations most of the greatest pieces of architecture the great hall had to offer. They were the walls and ceiling. They had mosaics, banners and tapestries on them. By the amount of banners I would say that Rohan is made up of lots of little states.

Next I turned to the reason why the hall can stay up and not collapse. So as you might know I am talking about the pillars. On the outside they were slender and black with Celtic patterns on them in gold. Inside, however, they are slightly larger. They are all evenly spaced apart.

My eyes fell to the floor expecting to see a much less decorative piece of artwork. I expected this because usually people overlook the floor, seeing it as if it isn't in need of looking good. Yet here it was simple, yet beautiful. It was Celtic patterns in slab form. It was clean enough to eat off and had the same colour as the indoor pillars, brownish red lines over grey slabs.