

Puzzlewood

A Magical Woodland in the Forest of Dean

Fantasy Writing KS2

Puzzlewood is a designated ancient woodland. It is a special, important and protected place. The woodland is so old it has developed intricate communities of plants, animals and fungi.

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

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 is also a willow maze (labyrinth) and a mysterious door (which could lead to another world) at Puzzlewood that could also be used as settings within *The Quest* story.

Before your visit:

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?

During your visit:

You are requested to stay on the marked paths in order to preserve this important ancient site.

Puzzlewood as the enchanted setting

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 *covered area, 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 the covered barn, garden and the house in the woods.

After your 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

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?

