



WHY LEARN WITH *RETURN FROM TROY*?

There are many reasons for using *War with Troy* and *Return from Troy* in classrooms. The Iliad and Odyssey are two of Europe's most important cultural icons: but the epic tales that eventually became written, literary 'classics' were originally told in festivals, streets and public spaces, to entertain and educate generations of ancient Greeks. The foundations of Europe's first 'educated' society lay not in schoolbooks, but in stories. Perhaps that is why the significance for ancient Greece of The Iliad and Odyssey has often been compared with that of The Bible for later European civilisations. Stories formed a curriculum before the term was coined, long before the invention of formal schooling. As with their oral stories the ancient Greeks liked to talk about ideas such as philosophy, history and science: then graduated to writing and teaching about them at previously unimagined analytical length, in formal academies and schools. Pedagogy was born from a society soaked in stories. Hugh Lupton and Daniel Morden are therefore modern links in an ancient chain, linking storytelling to learning and teaching. Working with them, and in scores of primary schools, we have produced this version of The Odyssey. The result is not just a highly entertaining and effective aid to speaking and listening, but a lure to hook primary-aged children into words, literacy and imagination through enjoyable and practical learning activities. As well as varied and specific literacy teaching objectives across twelve chapters, these learning methods include drama, group and paired work, discussion, dance, music, making art and manipulating images, writing, setting quizzes, composing poems and producing story boxes.

Our emphasis on imaginative outcomes in children's learning and literacy reflects the creative process used by these storytellers. Hugh and Daniel explain their craft in a recorded interview, which can be streamed from our site. Storytelling is described as:

“A process of finding pictures – seeing the story as a sequence of pictures – one picture following another and the words wind in and out of the pictures. So as you are working on a story some bits fall away, because you cannot quite see them. Some bits become clearer and you find yourself making your own particular journey through the story.”

Children listening to Odysseus' story make a similar, interpretive journey in the company not just of these storytellers but of a genuinely heroic, if flawed, human being. Daniel describes how:

“Odysseus differs from a lot of the Greek heroes because he uses his cleverness to overcome problems, as often as he uses his strength. He is a fascinating character because he can outwit a giant rather than trying to kill the giant – he uses his brain in a very creative way.”

Listening to the twelve enthralling chapters of *Return from Troy*, alongside using the detailed classroom support contained in this *Guide*, similarly helps children and teachers to think in creative and interesting ways. We promise that if you take this journey, you will enjoy it: for some of your children it will be one they never forget.

