Story of Theseus and the Minotaur

Teacher Notes and Curriculum Information

Links to The Northern Ireland Primary Curriculum.

Language and Literacy:
- Listen to, respond to and explore stories.
- Listen to, interpret and retell, with some supporting detail.
- Listen to and respond to guidance and instructions.
- Take turns at talking and listening in group and paired activities.

The Arts:
- Encourage children to talk and write about their own art and design and respond to that of others using appropriate language to record and represent their learning visually.

The World About Us:
- Pupils should be enabled to:
  - Express opinions and ideas about people and places in the world around us. (Past).

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Step One

Whole Class: Read the story of Theseus and the Minotaur to the children.
Story of Theseus and the Minotaur

Step Two

Individual Activities:
Use the ‘whole class activity’ as a springboard for the following activities:
1. Drawing and retelling of the story.
2. Drawing of the Minotaur.
3. Design/Draw a Maze Monster (not a Minotaur).
4. Junk modelling the Maze monster - A wide variety of materials could be used. A prime example of this is food packaging.

Step Three

Elicit the story from the children and write main points on the board in 8 squares e.g.:

1. The Minotaur lived in Crete. It had the head of a bull and the body of a man.
2. King Minos orders a special maze to be built for the Minotaur to live in.
3. Every nine years 7 boys and 7 girls are sent from Athens to King Minos.
4. King Minos sends the young people into the labyrinth. No one comes out.
5. Prince Theseus goes to Crete as one of the prisoners.
6. Princess Ariadne falls in love with Theseus. She gives him a ball of string.
7. Theseus kills the Minotaur and finds his way out with the string.
8. Theseus sails back to Athens with the other young people.

Individual / Pair Work: Give each child/pair a number and ask them to draw a picture of the part of the story relating to their number. Display the pictures in the correct order to make a 'comic strip' on the classroom wall.
THE STORY - Theseus and the Minotaur

A long time ago, on an island called Crete, there lived a monster. It was called the Minotaur. It had the body of a man and the head of a bull. The Minotaur ate children. King Minos of Crete ordered a special home to be built for the Minotaur. It was a labyrinth (a type of maze).

Now, King Minos had defeated the King of Athens in a war. To avoid the threat of his country being destroyed, every nine years the King of Athens would send seven boys and seven girls to King Minos as a sacrifice. King Minos would then send the fourteen young people from Athens into the labyrinth. No one ever came out of the labyrinth alive.

The King of Athens had a son called Theseus. Theseus was horrified when he learnt why the boys and girls were being sent to Crete. He decided to go to Crete as one of the prisoners and kill the Minotaur.

Now, King Minos had a daughter named Ariadne. When she saw Theseus, she fell in love with him and decided she would help him to defeat the Minotaur. Ariadne gave Theseus a ball of string and told him to tie it to the entrance of the labyrinth. He unwound it as he went through the passages, so that he could follow it back out again.

When Theseus found the Minotaur, he killed it with one blow of his sword. Then he quickly wound up the string and led all the young people out of the labyrinth. They sailed back to Athens. They were the first people to have survived going into the Minotaur’s labyrinth!