PLANNING

Theme: Trolls

Overview of learning:
- Story writing
- Descriptions
- Animals in their environment
- Developing observation skills

Interesting aspects:
- Trolls and other fairy-tale characters
- Dangerous environments
- Tracking and observing from a distance

Inquiry questions:
- Can you tell a book by its cover? (Impressions, reputations, and hearsay)
- To what extent are we shaped by our background and by our environment?

Narrative:
A team of scientists are commissioned by the Queen to track down and observe the trolls of the forest who are (according to reports) blighting the lives of her subjects. Some of her advisers are telling her that the Trolls need to be culled, but the Queen wants to know more before making such a drastic decision.

Expert team: Scientists
Client: The Queen of Fairy-Tale Land
Commission: To track down and observe the trolls of the forest. Then to report back to the Queen (via carrier-pigeon) with what the team have observed and what they suggest to do with the trolls.

Other points of view:
- Trolls
- Farmers affect by the trolls
- People from the village affected by the toll
- The Queen’s advisers
Tasks:
- To track the trolls and find their caves
- Using drones, observe the trolls from a distance
- Make observation notes
- Correspond with the Queen using carrier pigeon
- Make a map of the area, making where the trolls caves are
- Talk to other people (the farmer, the villagers) affected by the trolls
- Make recommendations to the queen, such as building a wall, putting up signs, giving guidance to the farmers. (Perhaps the trolls are scared of bright lights and these can be used)

Links to curriculum:
- English, reading and writing. In particular, making notes, writing letters, creating signs and instruction books
- Geography - map-making and geographical features
- Science - looking at habit, diet, shelter. And using observation skills.

Steps
Step 1: Introduction to the context
Adult in role (AIR) as the Queen.
Children are introduced to the role of the Queen. They watch as an AIR sits on a chair and looks like a person with a problem.
“What do you notice?” Discussion.

“What you can’t see is that upon this woman’s head is a crown.” Teacher places an imaginary crown upon the head of the Queen. Discussion.

“What would you like to know?” Teacher and AIR listen as children formulate questions.

AIR then speaks to herself as the Queen, choosing her words to answer some of the children’s questions. Such as, “What am I to do? They are causing so much damage and unhappiness. If only they would stay in the forest and keep away from the village. Why do they have to eat the sheep? Isn’t there enough food in the woods? These trolls are the bane of my life!”
“What did you hear?” Discussion.
“If you want to talk to the Queen you will need to come into the story.”

**Step 2: Setting the scene**

“What kind of chair do you think the throne would sit on when meeting guests?”

This is followed by a discussion about the throne, the throne room, the people in the room, the tapestries on the wall, etc.

**Step 3: Coming into the story**

Announce: “Today the Queen is being visited by people who she hopes will be able to help with the problem of the trolls. They are a team of scientist who, she has heard, are very experienced at studying animals in their habitats.”

“As she sits upon her throne, the doors swing open and the team enter.” Create this scene using drama, discuss how the team approach the throne and meet the Queen.

The Queen talks to them, telling them about her plight and asking for their help.”

**Step 4: Equipment**

After the meeting with the Queen, the team discuss their plans and make lists of the kind of equipment they are going to need.

**Step 5: Finding the cave**

Using their drones, the team start to explore the forest.

**TASK:** The children make drawings to represent the forest and what they see. Tell them, this is before they find the trolls.

Then: “As the team fly over the forest looking at all the animals living there, they come across a cave.” [Teacher adds a picture of cave to the children’s drawings]. “This, they hope might be what they have been looking for!”

Q: “If this was the troll’s cave, what do you think the team would see around the entrance?”

**TASK:** The children make drawings.
There is a discussion about what these things might mean. The teacher looks to develop the children’s thinking.

**Step 6: The troll**

Put this on the whiteboard and read it with the children:

“Eventually the sun sets and the team turn on the night vision camera mounted on their drones. To begin with there is no activity and then suddenly they see a massive, lumbering figure emerging from the mouth of the cave. It has massive hands. Gnarled, muscular arms. A huge head, set with tiny eyes that reflect the light from the moon. Its back is bent and crooked, its legs short and stocky; yet despite these hindrances, it moves with surprising speed.”

Q: Should we follow the troll or stay and look inside the cave?

**Step 7: Following the troll**

If the team follow the troll:

“Turning their drones, the team follow the troll through the dark forest. For several minutes it lumbers along, swinging its great arms, heading north. Then, spotting a path, it turns abruptly west and heads towards the river. After several minutes more it reaches the edge of the forest. Stopping for a moment, it sniffs the air. Suddenly its keen hearing catches the sound of something in the sky and it looks up, directly into the camera of your drone! You catch your breath, what is it going to do? The troll stares for a while as if trying to solve a puzzle inside its dull-witted head and then shrugs, gives up thinking as hard work and steps out of the forest. Heading for the river and the fields beyond.”

New page:

“Wading through the river, the troll emerges on the other side, dripping wet. Not pausing to shake off the water, it heads up the hill and steps over the fence into the farmers field. There, quietly dozing in the moonlight, are a flock of young lambs. Oblivious to the danger coming towards them….”

The teacher stops. “I wonder what’s going to happen next? Who’d like to have a go at being the troll? Stand up if you want to be a troll. Now, let’s remind ourselves of what the troll looked like from the drone.” [Discus this with the children, go back to the previous slide if necessary]
The children represent the troll, bent back, swinging arms, etc, and consider what the troll is going to do in the field.
Once they’ve done this, bring them back to the carpet and create the next piece of writing together, following on from the last line on the board.

**Step 8: Going into the cave**

“With the troll away there is an opportunity for the team to investigate inside the cave. Coming out from the hiding places, the team creep, tip-toe, up to the entrance and head into the cave.”

Discuss with the class turning on their torches and exploring the cave. Use the dramatic imagination (page 175 of *A Beginner’s Guide to Mantle of the Expert*) to structure your questioning: What light is there inside the cave? What sounds can you hear? Where is there silence? Where is darkest? Is there anything moving? Anything still?

“As the team approach the back of the cave, they hear the sound of breathing. Not heavy breathing, like you would expect from a massive troll, but quiet breathing. The breathing of a child!”

Explore the back of the cave with the children, there they will find a troll baby quietly sleeping in its cot. Discuss this with the children and the implications.

**Step 9: The troll returns**

“Hearing the sound of the troll returning, the team head back to their hiding place. Once again watching from their drones, they see the troll lumbering back to its cave. Reaching the entrance it stops for a moment and starts sniffing the air. Getting down on all fours, its starts to examine the floor. Suddenly, it lets out a cry of despair and runs in to the cave…”

Discuss this development with the children.

“After a few minutes the troll emerges, this time walking slowly; in its arms the team can see the sleeping form of the troll baby.”

**Step 10: Reporting to the Queen**

“Back in their camp, the team set to work writing their reports to the Queen.” [These could be done individually or as a piece of class writing.]
Once finished the letters are tied to the leg of a carrier pigeon and sent off to the Queen. This done, the team lay down to sleep.

**Step 11: The queen replies**

“Next morning the team are woken by their ‘guards’ catching sight of the Queen’s carrier pigeon delivering her reply.”

Team read the reply from the queen [written by the teacher in response to their report. As well as feeding back and answering their questions, the Queen asks the team to continue their investigations, finding out about the other trolls.]

**Further activities**

All these activities can be commissioned by the queen in the form of letters delivered by carrier pigeon.

- Recommend solutions for the problem of the trolls
- Put up warning posters and create information leaflets
- Mapping the forest and the lands on the border
- Talking to the farmer
- Tracking other trolls (maybe not so sympathetic)
- Describing what the trolls look like [using pictures provided by the teacher]
- Observe the other animals in the forest
- Find out more about the Queen
- Spend more time developing the castle and its history
- Head up into the mountains to find a home for the trolls further away from people