

Podcasting at Killhope Mining Museum

Tuesday 10th June 2008

ITSS

Softease

Killhope

Scenario/Scene:

The Killhope mining museum lies at the upper end of Weardale and it was here that eight schools, four children per school and an assortment of staff from ITSS, the schools, the museum and Softease assembled for the 'great podcast challenge'. - **A day in the life of a washer boy**

The Task for the groups

To produce a podcast of up to 5 minutes about the life of a washer boy.

- The audience for the podcast was to be other children in Y5 and Y6 who are finding out about life in the Victorian era.
- Each team had the loan of a small voice recorder for use round the museum.
- ITSS/Softease provided brief tuition and support for using the recorders and software.
- During the morning each team had a conducted visit to the mine, dressing floor and mine shop. Teams were urged to make recordings of background sounds or interviews during the visit for later use in their podcasts.
- During the afternoon teams had access to laptops to combine the recordings into a podcast.
- Teams were encouraged to use any information from any source

What worked really well:

- The project idea
- The concept of adding real authenticity to a podcast
- The weather was superb
- The children were wonderful and worked hard all the way through the day
- The group of 'helpers' worked well together

What we would do next time in preparation:

ITSS staff

- Check the software – some machines did not pick up the microphones
- Buy some USB directional microphones
- Buy Headphone Splitters
- Provide clear sheet so pupils can note names and locations of recordings
- Provide details of travel times so teams do not arrive late
- Cut down the tour of the museum.
- Provide more information to staff about travel times
- Ensure briefing session for pupils at the start and at the start of editing
- Provide some guidance for staff on how much input they should have
- Provide training for staff BEFORE the event.
- (They could come along to have software installed on their laptops and to provide basic training)
- Agree times for use of the rooms within the museum as a prerequisite
- If possible, allow the children that will be attending the event to see/use one of the sound recorders before the event.

Suggested plan for next time:

9:30	Teams arrive
9:45	Briefing – Including brief demo of final product and details of the timing for the day
10-00	Start tour <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45 Mins Mine• 45 mins Washing Floor• 30 mins Mine Shop)
12-00	Lunch
12-30	Briefing – How to use the software
12-45	Teams start Compiling Podcast
2-00	Break (Judges to look at progress)
2-15	Continue
3-00	Finish Podcast
3-15	Present Prizes à 3-30 Close

Softease staff

- Bring:
 - back up microphones
 - back up MP3 recorders
- Email schools about podcasting
- Send all schools involved 30 day versions of the software 3 weeks before the event
- Need contact's email addresses so can register them on Podium ecourse to familiarise themselves with the software

School staff

- Provide the opportunity to have training on the software prior to the event
- Provide a finished example so staff have a better idea of what they are aiming for

Killhope staff

- Make sure that they are aware of the specific requirements of the task
- Ask them to prepare before hand places for good sounds
- Perhaps prepare some extra sounds
- Give plenty of time for individual sound recording

Children

- Warm clothes ESSENTIAL

What we would do next time on the site:

- Demonstrate the software to helpers, children and teachers
- Talk to the children and staff about the need to capture audio in situ as well as just sounds. Would have been nice to have more description about a task they were doing at the time as opposed to trying to remember what it was like to try and wash the stones etc. when back in the "classroom".
- More time to listen to completed podcasts would be good.

What preparation was needed:

Softease

- We are happy to do briefing/demonstration sessions to the attendees.
- Need to be more aware of expectations so that we can ensure we have developed a concise presentation that get the key messages across.

What didn't work:

- Children trying to work out how to use the sound recorders "on the go".

Useful information from the Royal Commission Report 1842

Washer Boys were Young - There used to be Girls

"As miners' boys grow up to be 10 or 11 years of age, they get employed in washing. Our Company does not take them earlier, nor does it employ any girls whatever. Formerly children of 8 or 9 would be employed, but not so of late years. We do not think it proper to employ girls. In some districts a few girls are employed by others. We do not think it suitable to the modesty and delicacy of the sex, to be so much associated in labour with boys."

John Parmley, agent for the mines of the Lead Company of London.

William Rodham

Aged 9 last January. Dresses ore; gets 7d a day. Has been here 2 summers. Works the same hours and the same way as the preceding witness. Whiles they lick him a little with their hands; the other boys do this, nothing to hurt (and chiefly from boyish quarrels amongst themselves). Can read (fairly), cannot write his name; goes to the Wesleyan Sunday School and Chapel often. Father is dead, was a miner. Has one brother 'washing' near here in lead mines.

(Taken from the Killhope Website following links to visits → school visits → So Much to See Do and Learn.