

The Kielder Brag: Curriculum-linked Activities

The Kielder Brag offers several opportunities for pupils to explore the *Who would live in a habitat like this?* line of enquiry using the story through art, science and storytelling. The suggested activities link the story with Kielder Water & Forest Park to offer a mix of: approaches to linking directly with the story; cross-curricula activities; and suggestions for engagement with the wider Kielder Forest environment.

ENGLISH AND STORYTELLING

ACTIVITY ES1: Children as storytellers

The Kielder Brag is an old story about a creature that is meant to live in the woods and forests of Kielder Water & Forest Park. No one knows where the story has come from and the last few pages are missing so no one knows how the story ends. Each chapter of the story is read by Niel Bushnell in film clips set in Kielder.

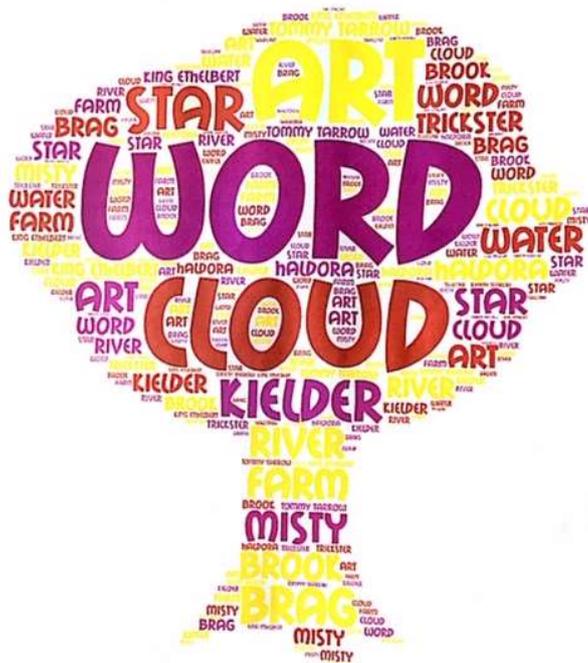
There are lots of opportunities for pupils to become storytellers by taking excerpts from the story – or their own creative writing – to read to small groups/the rest of the class. Storytelling can be enhanced and or/supported by using images as backdrops or to illustrate the stories being told.

Storytelling is a great way for pupils to develop confidence, public speaking and presentation skills.

See www.storytellingschools.com

ACTIVITY ES2: Word Art

Explore key words and phrases within The Kielder Brag and use them to create word art. See <https://wordart.com/create>



ACTIVITY ES3: Story Cubes

Download a cube template and print out onto thin card. Pupils draw images and/or words from The Kielder Brag onto each of the squares and when finished glue the flaps to make a dice. Use the dice to support creative writing and/or storytelling:

- working within small groups each pupil throws the dice three times and uses the words/characters as a starting point to develop a piece of creative writing;
- each pupil throws the dice three times and uses the words/characters within improvised storytelling.



ACTIVITY ES4: Write a newspaper report and act out a live news report

Watch the Kielder Brag News Report (add link)

Part 1: Write a short newspaper article using the information in the news report. Include:

- The newspaper's name
- A headline
- A byline
- Paragraphs including facts
- A quote

Part 2: Use the newspaper article to develop a news report that pupils read out as TV newsreaders in class.

ACTIVITY ES5: An ending for The Kielder Brag story

The Kielder Brag is an old story about a creature that is meant to live in the woods and forests of Kielder Water & Forest Park. No one knows where the story has come from and the last few pages are missing so no one knows how the story ends.

After reading the rest of the story, pupils watch the filmed version of chapter 4 (add link here) where they are invited to create their own ending for the story. Pupils can:

- Use creative writing to complete the story; or
- Create a storyboard illustrating the events leading to the story's end.

Each pupil reads their own ending to The Kielder Brag to the rest of the class as part of a storytelling session.

ART

ACTIVITY A1: Create an illustration of the Kielder Brag using the descriptive passage below (chapter 2, paragraph 2 – follow the link for the filmed version)

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/yknzx7z53okaxv1/Kielder%20Brag%20Chapter%20Two%20extract.mp4?dl=0>

The shadow moved towards the river, and the last of the light touched its form, revealing its odd shape. This was no ordinary man, Brooke realised with a gasp. He had two hooved legs, dense with dark muscle like those of a shire horse, but his torso was broad, covered in coarse hair and strange tattoos. His arms were thick and powerful, and longer than any man's; his huge hands hung down towards the ground so that his round knuckles scraped grooves into the soil. Finally, Brook glanced up to the creature's head: the beast had a man's face, with mischievous eyes under a heavy brow. His nose and mouth jutted out, almost into a snout that gave him a rat-like profile. His teeth were elongated and sharp, glinting in the setting light, and from his temples grew two twisted horns like those belonging to a ram. Fear quickened in Brook's mind... "You are a brag!" he said, fortifying his voice against his trembling heart.

ACTIVITY A2: Design a Brag shelter

Using the imagery from the film clips and descriptive passages within the story, design the shelter in which the Brag lives. Think about what it's made of, where it might be (underground, hidden within the trees, etc.) and how big it is. Here are a few ways you can present your work:

- describe the brag's habitat using creative writing;
- make a picture or collage, thinking particularly about colour and texture;
- use a digital photograph and work into it digitally with drawing or montage;
- make a 3D model of the brag's shelter using recycled materials;
- build a den outside using natural materials and photograph it.

ACTIVITY A3: Design The Kielder Brag book cover

Having read the whole story, pupils design a book cover for the Kielder Brag story. Pupils:

- Use illustration to get across the main themes of the story;
- Choose the font for the title; and
- Design the book cover layout using the text and illustration.

ACTIVITY A4: Nature printing

Nature Printing is “... *an ancient artform that takes objects in nature and, through a wide variety of techniques, transfers the beauty of those objects into art.*” (The Nature Printing Society)

The Kielder Brag is set within Kielder Water & Forest Park and the story – and Simon’s blogs and video clips – make many references to the trees, plants and animals living there. Pupils explore the theme of habitats through imagery made from plants and nature, for example:

Pupils learn about the life cycle of salmon through Kielder Salmon Centre (the Tyne is now one of England’s best salmon rivers) and explore gyotaku, a method of printing from fish introduced by Japanese fishermen to record their catch before the widespread use of photography. Real fish – or silicon fish forms – are inked and paper placed over them and the ink gently rubbed through onto the paper (gyotaku can be translated as fish rubbing) to leave an impression of the fish.

See <http://www.natureprintingsociety.org/> for more information and inspiration.

SCIENCE

ACTIVITY S1: What can we learn about the brag and its habitat?

Watch Simon’s phone camera footage (include link here) and record what you find out about the brag: How does Simon know the brag is close by? What methods does he use to track the brag? What does the brag eat? When is the most likely time of day to see the brag?

Record your findings and evidence of the brag using simple scientific language and labelled drawings.

ACTIVITY S2: Learn about Kielder Water & Forest Park habitats

The Kielder Brag is set in Kielder Water & Forest Park, home to Northern Europe’s largest man-made lake and England’s largest forest. Pupils can develop a broader understanding of habitats by learning more about Kielder.

Kielder’s range of habitats, from woodland to marshy grasslands and bogs, create homes for lots of wildlife and plants. It is home to around 50% of England’s native red squirrel population, as well as osprey (in 2009 three chicks were born to a record-breaking osprey couple – the first birds for at least 200 years to successfully raise chicks in Northumberland), goshawk, crossbill, house martins, swallows, swifts, sand martins, water voles, salmon, pine martins, roe deer, bats, foxes, badgers, otters and adders.

In terms of woodlands, the Forestry Commission is increasing the biodiversity of Kielder Forest and softening the plantation boundaries by planting native tree species and conserving the remnants of ancient semi-natural woodlands.

More information about Kielder wildlife can be found at <https://www.visitkielder.com/play/discover/wildlife-nature>