



Dear readers,

Welcome to this year's Tir na n-Og Award English language category shadowing scheme pack. We really hope that you will enjoy reading the shortlisted titles. There are lots of great suggestions and ideas in the resource pack that will help you really get to know the books. You are now part of the unofficial judging panel, and that's official! Let us know what you think of the books, send us any photos or evidence of what you've been up to and who knows, you might get an opportunity to meet one of the authors!

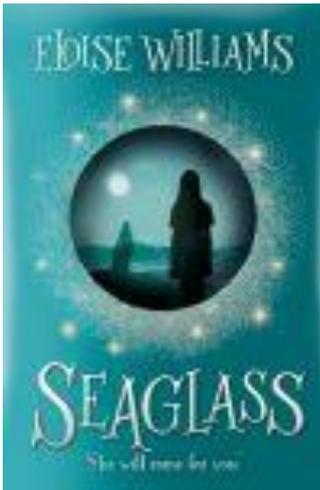
Tir na n-Og explained -

- Since 1976, the Tir na n-Og Awards have recognised excellence in the field of children and young adult literature in both English and Welsh.
- The awards are presented by the Welsh Books Council for the best books for children and young people published during the preceding calendar year.
- The main aim of the awards is to celebrate excellence in the field of literature for children and young people and to encourage the buying, reading and enjoyment of good books.
- Over the years the prize has been awarded to many of Wales' most distinguished children's authors.
- A judging panel comprised of representatives from a cross section of fields (education, libraries etc) meet at the beginning of the year to draw up a shortlist of eligible titles.
- The English-language award honours one book with an "authentic Welsh background" whose original language is English. It is sponsored by the British Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, Cymru Wales division (CILIP/Wales), and presented at that association's annual conference in May.

Helen Jones, Head of Children's Books and Reading Promotion
Welsh Books Council, Castell Brychan, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 2JB

wbc.children@books.wales

@LlyfrDaFabBooks



Seaglass – Eloise Williams

Suitable for 9 -11yrs

Publisher: Firefly Press

Format: Paperback, 198x129 mm, 264 pages

RRP: £6.99

ISBN: 9781910080801

Summary

Lark struggles to settle when her family moves to a new site on the coast. Her mother is ill, her little sister has stopped speaking and she has fallen out with her best friend. Is a girl in a green dress following her in the fog? Or is her sister playing tricks on her? When a local woman tells her 'the girl' comes to take sisters, Lark knows only she can save her family.

Judges' Comments

Set in Pembrokeshire, the beautiful landscape is skilfully evoked throughout and provides both comfort and adventure to Lark, her family and friends, even though the younger characters are not impressed initially by the lack of phone signal in their half term holiday venue.

Lark's trials and the genuinely engaging suspense will appeal to younger teenagers. Both landscape and reading books are strong motifs throughout, as are the themes of isolation, growing up, prejudice and otherness, so relevant as always. This is a lively read with much to engage its intended audience.

About the Author

Eloise Williams grew up in Llantrisant and lives in Saundersfoot, Pembrokeshire, very close to the beach where she walks her dog Watson Jones. She worked in the theatre in wardrobe, then studied Drama. After working for over ten years as an actress, she studied for a masters in Creative Writing at Swansea University.

Also by the author

Elen's Island (9781910080207) and *Gaslight* (9781910080542).

Before you begin

1. What do you notice about the front cover?
2. What do you think Seaglass is?
3. What are you most taken by after reading the blurb, what do you want to know?
4. Take yourself to West Wales in your mind: think about the landscape, think about your senses: what do you see, how do you feel, what can you smell?
5. What could be wrong with Lark's mum?
6. What could have caused her to fall out with her best friend?
7. Picture the girl in the green dress.
8. Have you ever read any other books described as 'eerie'?

When you have read the book

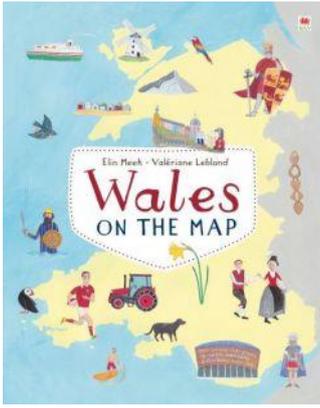
1. What would you like to think happens next?
2. If you could have given Lark any advice, what would it be?
3. Was it what you expected?
4. Did the descriptions of the landscape match what you had imagined before reading the book?
5. Does the blurb reflect the story well?
6. Would you read another of Eloise Williams' books?

Suggested Activities

1. *Creative Development* — Sea glass art work, what could you make? (mobiles, mosaic pictures, collages with other found objects)



2. *STEM* — Light activities with sea glass.
3. *Literacy* — Teacher in Role / Child in Role – Nana, German child, sister, mum, dad
4. *PSE* — Use of mobile phone / dependence or friendships.
5. *Environment* — Discuss pollution in the oceans.
6. *Drama* — Choose a scene: Use the five senses to describe.
7. *Drama* — Box of props from the story – improvise.
8. *Creative movement* — Create a sequence from a part of the story.
9. *Creative development* — Draw your own front cover.
10. *Literacy* — Write an alternative ending.



Wales on the Map – Elin Meek, illustrated by Valérie Leblond

Suitable for 6yrs +

Publisher: Rily

Format: Hardback, 355x280 mm, 64 pages

RRP: £12.99

ISBN: 9781849670555

Summary

Explore the delights and hidden treasures of Wales on a voyage of discovery through this fascinating country. *Wales on the Map* is a lavishly illustrated picture atlas that showcases the best Wales has to offer. Each county is featured with colourful image icons highlighting famous people, places, animals, sport and other interesting facts about that area. A book to treasure and pass down through the generations.

Judges' Comments

A non-fiction title with information about Wales split into counties and provided in an atlas format. The panel considered the title to have instantly appealing illustrations that invited the readers to browse and want to look up their home areas. Map books of this type are popular with all ages and this title, it was felt, compared favourably with similar titles available. The illustrations and text worked well together, making it accessible to many audiences and a possible stepping stone to further information. It is obvious that the publisher has invested in ensuring quality illustrations and finish and has ensured a wide range of facts about Wales. The book also comes with supporting material e.g. a quiz book.

About the Author

Elin Meek grew up in Ystalyfera and Carmarthen. She completed her teacher training in Cardiff, after studying Welsh and German at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth. She spent 10 years teaching in Trinity College, Carmarthen. She now works as a freelance translator, adapter and author from her home in Swansea.

Also by the author

Wales on the Map: Quiz Book (9781849670470)

Cyfres Amdani: C'mon Reff! (9781784616175)

Cyfres Amdani: Wynne Evans - O Gaerfyrddin i Go Compare (9781845216856)

Helpwch eich Plentyn/Help Your Child: Creu Brawddegau/Forming Sentences (9781843233541)

Before you begin

1. What do you notice about the front cover?
2. Can you identify the pictures / places featured on the front cover?
3. What do you already know about the Wales?
4. What would you like to know about Wales?
5. Do you think that this is a story book or an information book?

When you have read the book

1. Share 10 things that you have learnt about Wales
2. What unexpected things did you come across?
3. Which is your favourite region in Wales based on what you have learnt about it? Why?
4. Which region would you encourage a friend to visit? Why?
5. If you were visiting [name of region] which two places / activities would you visit? Why?
6. Think of 10 questions of your own to be included in the quiz book.

Suggested Activities

1. *Other* — Activities / quiz from the other books in the series.
2. *Literacy / Humanities* — Make your own fact file of Wales (based on page 3).
3. *Literacy / Creative* — Learn the anthem (singing or choral speaking).
4. *Science & Technology* — Carry out scientific investigations to test some of the statistics in the book (e.g. rainfall)
5. Carry out educational visits to any of the key places featured.
6. *Humanities / Literacy* – Carry out research about the famous people from your region.
7. *Curriculum Cymraeg / Literacy* – Explore the folklore & traditions of Wales. Expand these into topic / project-based work. Re-enact (*Drama*) and create an i-movie (*DCF*) of the stories.
8. *PSE* — Use page 59 to encourage discussion about caring for the environment in Wales – 5 Rs, sustainability, alternative technologies etc.
9. *Other* — Cooking / tasting activities based on the traditional foods listed on page 58.
10. *Literacy* — Carousel activity with photocopied pages – discussion/comprehension questions about the regions.
11. *Physical Development* — Be like the Welsh sporting heroes and try football, rugby, boxing, cycling and taekwondo. Alternatively, try playing Cnapan or Bando. Which do you prefer!?



The Storm Child – Gill Lewis

Suitable for 9-11yrs

Publisher: Oxford University Press

Format: Paperback, 187x128 mm, 96 pages

RRP: £8.50

ISBN: 9780198421139

Summary

This beautifully illustrated story is an adaptation of the Welsh legend of Cante'r Gwaelod, the lost area of Wales which disappeared beneath the sea. This drowned land was once a pleasant and prosperous kingdom, its low-lying fields protected from the waves by a high sea wall. But only Mererid, the storm child, knows that the tide-gates are failing and the next storm will breach the wall. As clouds and ravens gather overhead, she must race to save her friends and the kingdom before it's too late...

Judges' Comments

Part of the Oxford Reading Tree higher level reading scheme, this is a retelling of the Cante'r Gwaelod legend. The title was considered by the panel to be a beautiful retelling of the legend with a descriptive narrative and certainly fulfils the authentic Welsh background criteria. As well as the narrative, the title was a whole package with good quality illustrations appropriately placed and an appealing cover.

About the Author

Before she could walk, Gill Lewis was discovered force-feeding bread to a sick hedgehog under the rose bushes. Now her stories reflect her passion for wild animals in wild places. She draws inspiration from many of the people she has had the fortune to meet during her work as a vet, both at home and abroad. She lives in Somerset with her family and menagerie of animals, and writes from a tree-house, in the company of squirrels.

Also by the author

White Dolphin (9780192756213)

Sky Hawk (9780192756244)

Before you begin

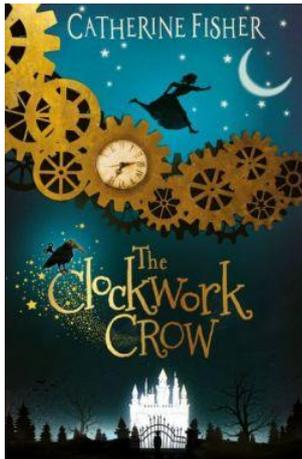
1. What do you notice about the front cover?
2. What do you know of the Welsh legend of Cantre'r Gwaelod?
3. Study how the storm child is drawn on the front cover – what does this suggest about her character?
4. The character on the front cover is holding a key — what do you think it unlocks?
5. What impression do the ravens give you on the front cover of the book?
6. The book has been selected by Michael Morpurgo. He is quoted on the back cover, “*I was swept away by this thrilling, mysterious story*”. What does this suggest to you?
7. The blurb describes how the fisher folk don’t speak to the storm child for fear she will bring them bad luck. What else have you heard of that could bring bad luck?
8. This is a retell of another story. Can you think of any other tales that you have read that are based on an original story?

When you have read the book

1. Was the story what you expected having read the blurb and studied the cover?
2. Why were the people of the town mistrustful of Mererid at the start of the story?
3. How did Lord Cadwalladar persuade the King to let Seth become the Wall Guard?
4. Do you think Angelos was right or wrong to keep the story of Mererid’s past from her?
5. Do you agree with Michael Morpurgo?
 - Were you ‘swept away’ by the story?
 - What made the story ‘thrilling and mysterious’?

Suggested Activities

1. *PSE / STEM* — The author talks about the risks if we neglect to challenge the man-made causes of climate change. Compose a letter to your local MP outlining what is needed to reduce the risk of climate change.
2. *PSE* — Fairness and justice: explore other stories of famous people of time where there has been a sense of unfairness and injustice.
3. *PSE* — The foreword talks about destruction in the world caused by mankind’s folly and neglect: what lessons can be learnt from this story?
4. *Literacy* — Get in character: Turn to page 18: you have just uncovered the key to the knowledge of who you are and where you came from. You are questioning how Angelos could keep these secrets from you in your mind. You come face to face with him: what questions would you need to ask him?
5. *PSE* — Was Angelos treated fairly?
6. *Creative Development / Literacy* — Can you design an alternative book cover and write an alternative blurb for the back cover?
7. *Literacy* — Can you write an alternative ending to the story?



The Clockwork Crow – Catherine Fisher

Suitable for 9-11yrs

Publisher: Firefly Press

Format: Paperback, 198x129 mm, 240 pages

RRP: £6.99

ISBN: 9781910080849

Summary

The Clockwork Crow is an imaginative adventure story for junior school age. When Seren Rhys left the orphan home to go and live with her aunt and uncle in rural mid-Wales, the last thing she expected was to become responsible for an abandoned and in pieces clockwork crow and to be thrown into a mystery surrounding Plas-y-Frân. With her aunt and uncle away and her cousin Tomos, whom she had hoped to enjoy Christmas with, mysteriously missing, she is left to her own devices to explore the house and grounds where she finds closed doors, snow globes and other worlds.

Judges' Comments

A historical novel set in mid Wales with an element of mystery and magic. This novel was considered by the panel to be imaginative, beautifully descriptive, captivating and derivative of many classic titles (e.g. *Chronicles of Narnia* C. S. Lewis) yet still unique and typical of the high quality expected from author Catherine Fisher. The cover was felt to be much more appealing than any of the other titles put forward, inviting the reader; "the sort of book I would want to read as a child". The main character was written in such a way as to make the reader want to be her and to feel empathy for her. The author has used Welsh names and phrases and has some beautiful descriptions of the Welsh countryside ensuring the panel felt it met the criteria required. The book was considered to be well edited, the illustrations wonderful and of an overall high quality.

About the Author

Catherine Fisher was born in Newport, Wales. She graduated from the University of Wales with a degree in English and a fascination for myth and history. She has worked in education and archaeology and as a lecturer in creative writing at the University of Glamorgan. She is a Fellow of the Welsh Academy.

Also by the author

The Obsidian Mirror (9780340970089)

The Cat with Iron Claws (9781848513174)

Before you begin

1. What do you notice about the front cover?
2. What can you infer from the front cover?
3. What questions do you have about the front cover?
4. After reading the blurb – what more can you work out? What questions have we answered? What further questions have arisen?
5. From the title and illustrations, what do you think the novel could be about? What makes you think that?
6. Can you predict what will happen in the novel?
7. What or who do you think the Clockwork Crow is?
8. What genre is the novel? What makes you think that?

When you have read the book

1. What are your thoughts / feelings regarding the text? Why?
2. What are your feelings towards Seren? The Crow? Denzil?
3. How do your thoughts about Mrs Villiers change throughout the novel?
4. How is this novel similar / different to... (other novels shared, well none classics etc)?
5. What role does the Crow play throughout the novel?
6. How would you feel if you were Seren / the Crow at various points throughout the novel? Why?
7. What genre features make up this novel?
8. If you were in Seren's shoes, what would you have done?
9. What might have happened if Seren hadn't taken the tiny snow globe?

Suggested Activities

1. *Literacy* — Newspaper article / oral news report about the disappearance of Tomos using all the key information from the text – direct quotes from Mrs Villiers, detailed description of when /where he was last seen etc.
2. *Literacy* — Character descriptions – comparing and contrasting characters.
3. Reasoned predictions of what is behind the locked door in the attic.
4. *Creative* — Art work representing Them or other parts of the story.
5. *STEM* — children to design and make their own clockwork / wind up object – to write instructions following this learning.
6. *Literacy* — Persuasive advert (oral or written) for children's own clockwork object.
7. *Literacy* — Persuasive report / leaflet advertising Plas y Frân.

8. *Humanities* – Comparing and contrasting different localities within Wales; discuss where in Wales Plas y Frân could be set and why children think this.
9. *Humanities* - Comparison of children's lives with that of Seren's.
10. *Literacy* - Diary extract as Tomos, Seren, the Crow, Mrs Villiers etc.
11. *Literacy* - To write about further adventures the Crow could have after leaving Seren – share these with Catherine Fisher (a sequel to The Clockwork Crow).
12. *Creative* - Create a trailer for the novel using iMovie.
13. *Creative* – children to create music to represent Them as They close in on Seren and the Crow in the final chapters.
14. *Creative* – children to design and create their own snow globe.