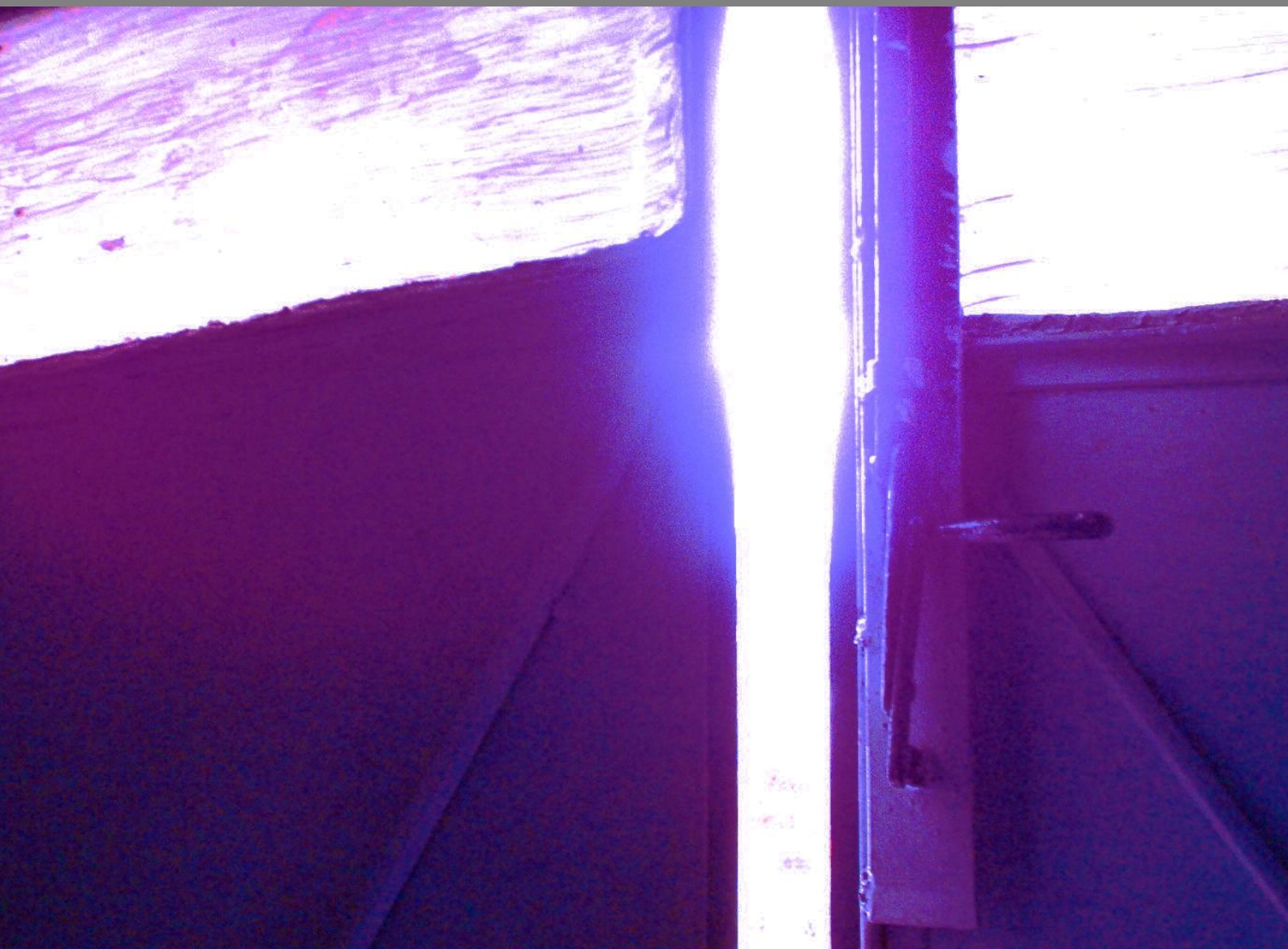


Still Spell-Bound: Story Times in Welsh Museums, Archives and Libraries



Report by George Ewart Evans Centre for
Storytelling for CyMAL



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STILL SPELL-BOUND: STORY TIMES IN WELSH MUSEUMS, ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

O DAN YR HEN GYFAREDD: AMSEROEDD STORI YN AMGUEDDFEYDD, ARCHIFAU A LLYFRGELLOEDD CYMRU

A report for CyMAL(Welsh Museums, Archives and Libraries) by Patrick Ryan, PhD, FEA, George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling at CCI, University of Glamorgan

‘Storytelling has been called the oldest and newest of the arts. Though its purpose and conditions change from century to century, and from culture to culture, storytelling continues to fulfil the same basic social and individual needs. Human beings seem to have an innate impulse to communicate their feelings and experiences through storying. We tell stories in order to make sense of our world. We express our beliefs, desires, and hopes in stories, in an attempt to explain ourselves and to understand others.’

Ellin Greene and Janice M. Del Negro, Storytelling: Art and Technique

CONTENTS

0.1. Executive summary.....	3
-----------------------------	---

0.2. Acknowledgments and thanks.....	6
--------------------------------------	---

SECTION 1

1.0. Introduction.....	7
--	-------------------

1.1. Definitions.....	9
---------------------------------------	-------------------

1.2. How Information Was Gathered.....	11
--	--------------------

SECTION 2

2.0. Information Gleaned.....	13
---	--------------------

2.1. Distribution of Responses.....	13
---	--------------------

2.2 Typical Content for Story Times in Welsh Institutions.....	14
--	--------------------

2.3. Picture Book Storytelling.....	15
---	--------------------

2.4 Other Kinds of Story Time Activities.....	16
---	--------------------

2.5 Languages Used in Story Times.....	19
--	--------------------

2.6 Users and Audiences.....	19
--	--------------------

2.7 Who Delivers Story Time Activities.....	22
---	--------------------

2.8 Rationale for Story Time Activities.....	23
--	--------------------

SECTION 3

3.0 Recommendations for Further Support and Expansion.....	24
--	--------------------

3.1 Supporting Evidence for Expanding Story Time Practices.....	24
---	--------------------

<u>3.2 Potential for Expansion and Development: Specific Suggestions.....</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>3.3 Practicalities: Making it Happen.....</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>4.0 Concluding Remarks.....</u>	<u>39</u>
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX I. <u>Part (A) Survey questions and choice of responses.....</u>	<u>41</u>
<u>Part (B) Breakdown of Responses.....</u>	<u>45</u>
APPENDIX II. <u>Part (A) Comments, Suggestions, and Models of Good</u>	
<u>Practice.....</u>	<u>48</u>
<u>Part (B) Sources, Resources, and Potential Partners.....</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</u>	<u>61</u>

0.1. Executive Summary

'I would not for any quantity of gold part with the wonderful tales I have retained since my childhood.'

Martin Luther

Purpose of Study:

While developing plans for continuing professional development of frontline staff in Welsh Museums, Archives and Libraries, CyMAL realised there was no recent, comprehensive report on story time practices in Welsh curated and bibliographic institutions. As a result they asked the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling (GEECS) to conduct such a study and to report back by Autumn 2012. CyMAL plans to use this report as a guideline for senior management in planning how to expand and improve services in all sectors. This in turn will help to prioritise and develop future policies regarding CyMAL's own work supporting the three sectors, especially in providing continuing professional development of staff.

Methodology:

Patrick Ryan, in consultation with colleagues at GEECS, and with the help of CyMAL staff, developed a questionnaire using Survey Monkey to survey practitioners. A cover letter and link to the survey was disseminated electronically by CyMAL to over 200 library, archive and museum staff in key positions throughout Wales. The cover letter encouraged those invited to complete the survey to also send it on to any members of their staff directly responsible for or actually leading story time practices in their authority. The survey and letter provided a broad definition of story time practices, with examples, in order to get as comprehensive picture of those practices as possible, given the constraints of time, budget and personnel.

We had a return of 118 surveys. In addition, selected practitioners (library, archive, and museum staff, and also professional storytellers and writers regularly providing story time activities) in museums, archives and libraries across Wales were interviewed in person or by telephone. This was to provide additional comment, suggestions and criticisms to contextualize the results of the survey and guide any recommendations.

Findings:

- The majority of respondents have been library staff; of the three sectors, libraries are the venue for the majority of story time activities
- A few museums, however, report substantial developments and practices in story time activities
- Very few archives reported back and those that did indicated minimal or no story time work going on
- The majority of library story time activity is for children aged five and under, and mostly consists of rhyme time and picture book storytelling
- Although a minority, a significant number of staff do tell stories from memory (traditional and literary, as well as some original pieces)
- There is not as much story time activity for primary school aged children (KS1 and KS2) as we anticipated, even though library visits and story times have

been shown to improve reading in children this age; part of the problem is that schools' timetables, curricula and budgets are too restrictive to encourage or allow time for library visits

- Museums see a wide range of story time activities similar to those found in libraries
- Museums' story time activities tend to appeal to a wider range of ages (That is, rather than story times being mostly for children aged five and under, museums schedule sessions that are mostly for families and visiting school groups with older children)
- Although archives have little or no story time activity, there is scope for storytelling and digital storytelling to serve this sector, particularly with public interest in local and oral history and in genealogy
- There is minimal story time activity provided for teens and adults in the 20-50 age range
- There is some story time activity provided to senior citizens, but such practices are sporadic and unevenly distributed.
- Any story time activities for those over the age of five tend to happen in situations such as: book groups, book weeks, and/or summer reading challenges and on special occasions such as World Book Day, St. David's Day, Halloween, or a local event
- There has been extremely little digital storytelling practice and few such projects in libraries, museums, and archives; however there is interest in communities for developing such work, particularly in relation to museums' and archives' remits for oral history and family genealogy projects
- The distribution of the most common story time practices (activities for under fives and primary school) appears equally and evenly spread in geographic and linguistic terms.

Recommendations:

- There is potential to expand upon current practices and to introduce new ones
- This development would enhance the services of all three sectors (museums, archives and libraries), and provide better services to the public
- Areas for expansion are:
 - Increased story time activities for primary school children (ages 6 to 11)
 - More digital storytelling, especially for archives and museums, and for local interest groups using libraries' facilities and support
 - More story time activities for and by secondary school students (11-18), particularly as volunteers in a community scheme or work experience programme
 - Enabling libraries, museums and archives to support local schools to raise standards, through providing training and resources for staff at these institutions but especially by encouraging schools to visit and coordinate practices with professionals outside the classroom
 - More oral performance of stories (storytelling, authors' readings, and/or performance poetry) and digital storytelling for adults and

senior citizens should be considered; institutions can be producers of such events or hosts, providing venue and publicity with individuals and local organisations administering the events

- Additional accredited courses should be developed and provided for all frontline museum, library and archive staff on storytelling for children aged five and under, but also for storytelling to primary school aged children
- Partnerships between the sectors (museums, archives and libraries) but also between public and private bodies with similar interests, philosophies and audiences should be encouraged to make practical any expansion of story times and to assist in funding

0.2. Acknowledgements and Thanks

Many helped make this report, especially GEECS colleagues Hamish Fyfe, Karen Lewis and Dawn Matthews, and CyMAL staff Lesley-Anne Kerr, Velma Hather, and Denise Lavis. Support staff at both CyMAL and University of Glamorgan's School of Creative and Cultural Industries must also be thanked for their professional, reliable, friendly services.

A number of people gave much of their time to filling out additional reports and surveys, and, especially, to be interviewed. I would especially like to thank the following:

Ceri Black, Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales
Guto Davis, Storyteller and Musician
Paul Doyle, Reading Development Officer, Neath Port Talbot Libraries
Michael Harvey, Storyteller
Cath Little, Storyteller and Singer
Mary Medicott, Storyteller and Author
Daniel Morden, Storyteller and Author
Liz Weir, Storyteller, Author and Librarian

All of these have been most generous with their time and especially, their experience, knowledge, expertise and wisdom. It is most appreciated.

Any errors or misinterpretations are entirely the fault of the author of this report, however I have done my best to report the findings as clearly and accurately as possible. I would like to thank those who asked me to conduct this study, which has been a thoroughly fascinating project and made for a most enjoyable summer of work.

Patrick Ryan, PhD FEA, September 2012

1.0. Introduction

In Brussels, at the International Library Congress of August 1910, Harry Farr, librarian of the Cardiff Public Libraries, reported on the children's library services in Cardiff and Wales specifically and the UK generally. He declared that a 'passive attitude on the part of librarians and library authorities is no longer possible if libraries are to be a factor in national progress.' Arguing on behalf of the newly created profession of the children's room superintendent, or children's librarian, he stated that the 'influence for good of an enthusiastic superintendent can hardly be exaggerated, and her work is one of the highest forms of social service.'

Farr described the storytelling work that his children's librarians carried out in Cardiff. The children's story-times of this period were magic lantern shows, exploring topics like birds, butterflies, astronomy and travel, and illustrating the stories told: *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *A Christmas Carol* and classic fairy tales. Farr rated highly the impact of these magic-lantern story times:

Books are introduced to children which otherwise they might never think of reading. For instance, last winter one of our story times dealt with Ruskin's "King of the Golden River." Hundreds of children listened spell-bound as this beautiful legend...was unfolded to them by a gifted story-teller, and illustrated by pictures on the lantern screen. The probability is that few, if any, of the children would ever have become acquainted with this story if it had not been made known to them in this way.

Harry Farr, *Library Work with Children*

Wales has a long tradition of storytelling. Whether remembering this librarian's advocacy of story times in libraries from a hundred years ago, or considering the rich rhetoric of chapel ministers, union organisers, and leading politicians from past and present, or when acknowledging the modern Welsh storytellers, performance poets and pop singers found in live venues across the world and on the net, or if evoking its recent strides in film, television, and digital media, or even when imagining the older romantic traditions of the bard in the medieval hall, such images reveal Wales as a nation of stories and storytellers.

The George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling (GEECS) was asked by CyMAL (Welsh Museums, Archives and Libraries) to conduct a study on storytelling so as to provide an overview of current story time activities in libraries, archives and museums across Wales. The purpose of such a study is to

- Establish as accurately as possible a picture of current practices in said institutions
- Demonstrate how such practices in libraries, archives and museums play an important role in education and community life in Wales
- Provide suggestions for future storytelling work, projects and events that build on such practices
- Harness the wide range of talent and depth of experience for story time activities that already exists in Wales.
- Determine any professional development such as training, accredited courses, or residencies that would enhance storytelling practices in Welsh museums, archives and libraries
- Ascertain potential partnerships or networks that would strengthen and widen story time practices across Wales, and provide better support for practitioners (museum, archive and library staff as well as professional storytellers, writers and performance poets).

In addition to providing information and advice to CyMAL in its plans for development, it is hoped this report will also be of use to library, museum and archive management teams, to Members of the Welsh Assembly, as well as to any other organisations or institutions for example:

- Llenyddiaeth Cymru / Literature Wales
- National Theatre Wales and Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru
- Forum for Storytelling in Wales
- Beyond the Border Storytelling Festival
- StoryWorks
- BBC Wales
- Other organisations, companies, businesses and individuals in Wales interested in, supporting, or active in the verbal arts in any media

It will be informative, too, for those talented and experienced individuals already practicing story time activities, both staff members in libraries, archives, and museums, as well as professional storytellers, poets, writers, drama practitioners, digital artists, visual artists, crafts people, musicians, and puppeteers.

We believe it will also be of interest to other authorities and organisations, in the United Kingdom and the wider European Union, such as

- CILIP (The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals),
- YLG (Youth Library Group),
- SLA (School Library Association),
- NLT (National Literacy Trust)
- The Reading Agency
- IBBY UK (International Board of Books for Young People, UK)

- NAWE (National Association of Writers in Education)
- SfS (Society for Storytelling)
- Scottish Storytelling Centre
- Storytellers of Ireland
- ACE (Arts Council England),
- FEST (Federation of European Storytellers)
- and local authority libraries and museums across the UK and Ireland

It is also possible that this study will be of interest to academics discussing various aspects of storytelling in professional and peer-reviewed journals; it would be useful therefore to make the report accessible to them. GEECS would be happy to help CyMAL in any dissemination of the report.

1.1. Definitions:

Terms such as ‘storytelling’, ‘storyteller’, ‘story time’, and ‘to tell a story’ are commonly understood. Even so, experience proves that such phrases can draw to mind as many different meanings as there are individuals who use or respond to these terms.

Professional storytellers are keen to establish that storytelling is an art form for adults, and not solely an entertainment for children. They also promote an image of narrative

Our emphasis throughout is on storytelling as an oral art. We believe that storytelling as a listening/language experience should not be lost. Our eye-minded society has forgotten the power of the spoken word and emphasized the visual, reducing written language to everyday speech, but in storytelling the full range of language is possible.’

Ellin Greene, Storytelling: Art & Technique

performances consisting primarily of stories related from memory or extemporized, and something qualitatively different from the act of reading aloud. Emphasis is placed on highly artful performances in semi-theatrical settings.

However, there is a substantial and equally valid practice of writers, poets and comedians performing orally, sometimes extemporarily but more often reading aloud. Such practices are popular and can be quite moving. And the general public, as do many museum, archive and library staff,

‘Reading aloud is an art, and like storytelling, requires careful selection and preparation.

Ellin Greene, Storytelling: Art & Technique

continue to consider storytelling as an important children’s activity, and probably always shall do. They also view it as immaterial whether narratives and rhymes are read aloud or conveyed from memory, so long as delivery is oral, interactive, and most importantly enjoyed.

Those working in libraries, archives and museums certainly recognize and respect all these different practices. Where they are confident and able to do so they deliver the whole range of these types of storytelling, and when possible schedule professional tellers and other verbal artists to deliver oral performance events. Some libraries, museums and archives also provide a venue to special interest groups, leaving it to those independent organisations or artists to deliver a variety of storytelling practices.

‘...language is a form of cognition; it is packaged for the purpose of interpersonal communication. Human beings want to share experience with one another and so, over time, they have created symbolic conventions for doing that....’

Michael Tomasello, *The Cultural Origins of Human Cognition*

Because the practices identified here can all be found in Wales, and as CyMAL has commissioned this report to ascertain the range of story time practices in museums, archives and libraries across all of Wales, the report will consider storytelling a broad term, encompassing all activities employed in story times in such institutions. For clarification, the term ‘story time activities’ will be relied on and the report will differentiate between oral storytelling, reading aloud and other variations where necessary.

However, it must be recognized that respondents often mean both extemporaneous telling and reading aloud when discussing storytelling for children, and even for some adult events in libraries and museums. Oral storytelling and reading narrative and poetry aloud are equally important skills, and vital experiences for children to develop literacy, a love of

‘When storyteller and child meet, life is enriched for both by the sharing of a story. To have laughed together, shared excitement or sadness, experienced wonder and emotion, establishes a mutual feeling of warmth and comradeship, an experience worth all that it may cost in time and energy.’

Eileen Colwell, *Storytelling*

literature, and good reading habits. Adult audiences derive as much pleasure from listening to authors and poets read aloud as they do from storytellers, rap artists, performance poets and stand-up comics extemporizing or performing from memory.

Other activities looked at here, commonly found in libraries, museums and archives across the world include reading groups, book talks, and summer reading challenges; also considered are arts and craft work, as well as games and table quizzes, all of which when practiced in libraries are inspired by or related to printed or oral texts. Creative writing lessons, oral history schemes and digital and

electronic projects also occur in libraries, museums and archives and all usually incorporate forms of oral storytelling or reading aloud.

A variety of such activities complement each form, and a regularly delivered variety of practices strengthen the services to the public by any library, museum or archive. Considering a wide spectrum of enriched, artful oral language experiences empowers any curated or bibliographic institution to plan and develop effective and popular services. The knowledge gathered here will, we hope, enrich story time programmes for any age under the management of such institutions.

1.2. How Information Was Gathered

Using the software service 'Survey Monkey', GEEC developed a questionnaire meant to ascertain the variety of story time activities happening across Wales within museums, archives and libraries, and also to quantify those activities in a meaningful way. CyMAL distributed the questionnaire electronically, emailing over 200 stakeholders in institutions across the country. The cover letter in this email (going primarily to senior management, head curators, children's librarians, and education officers) encouraged those receiving the initial email with the link to the survey to forward it to any other staff responsible for or more knowledgeable of story time activities.

'Evolutionary speaking, we talk because we were the only primates who gained social status and therewith fitness by talking.... Psychologically speaking, we talk because we must be heard.'

Marshall Poe *A History of Communications*

The questionnaire aimed to gather the following information:

- The kind of institution the individual worked for as well as nature of the community in Wales that institution served.
- The frequency of story time activities in that individual's institution.
- The range of activities happening in those story times.
- What language served as the medium for their story time activities.
- Who provided most of the story time activities.
- The types of audiences story times served, and an indication of how many participated in such events.
- Reasons for holding story times.

Response to the questionnaire was excellent, with 118 surveys returned to us. The list of questions and response choices can be viewed in the appendix, along with comments listed there and in marginalia.

In addition, we conducted targeted interviews with key individuals. These included a sampling of professional storytellers, both living in Wales and those from outside the country who work there regularly, and library, museum and archive professionals recommended to us because of their experience and their previous management of projects representing models of good practice. Their comments were of great help in developing this report.

2.0. Information Gleaned From Surveys and Interviews

Responses provided a good indication of what is happening in Welsh museums, libraries and archives, and what views that staff hold for providing story times. These results are discussed in Section 2. Some responses were gathered from the section requesting those surveyed to add their own comments. A few provided very detailed information suggesting where these three sectors might improve or expand story time services. An overview of these responses, combined with targeted interviews with professional tellers and writers, and some library and museum staff, are the source for recommendations for the future outlined in Section 3.

2.1. Distribution of Responses

The responses indicating types of institutions the respondents worked in, as well as the areas they served, assured us that the report reflects the whole of Wales. *(Please refer to Appendix I for a sample of the questionnaire and breakdown of these responses).*

By far the greatest number of those who answered the questionnaire was librarians (75.4%).

However, there were a significant number of museum workers (17.8%) and archivists (6.8%) replying to the

survey. A few of those replying from the latter two sectors submitted detailed descriptions of story time activities, indicating that some museums in certain areas are pursuing storytelling to a very large degree in all its forms. Of the three sectors there are more reports on practices in

libraries, and from a larger amount of library staff. Logically this is to be expected, as there are more libraries and library staff working in

Wales than there are museums or archives and their staffs. Most story time events would be expected in libraries. That the numbers confirm this is no surprise, but they also suggest we reached those who could most help us in gathering information needed about story times. Responses from key staff in the other two sectors, and interviews initiated afterwards, provide substantial information for the other types of institutions.

Story times are very popular here with both children and adults, and we would love to have them on a more regular basis if budget would allow.

Library Staff

Story time is viewed as a valuable social occasion for parents and toddlers in the area. Mothers from ethnic communities are particularly appreciative of the opportunities for social interaction and enhancing their children's learning.

Library Staff

Also supporting our desire to reflect practices across Wales is in the breakdown of the areas respondents' institutions serve. Over two-thirds of those answering say their institutions serve urban areas, with 55.6% set in suburban or market towns while 12.8% serve large metropolitan areas. Just over a third (34.2%) are in rural settings. However, while the majority (65.8%) serves mostly English-speaking areas, only 5% serve predominately Welsh-speaking regions. When one considers the results in the report indicate that 17.9% of respondents serve an equally mixed Welsh and English speaking area, and compares this to the 2001 census results indicating 20.8% of the population claims to speak Welsh, then we feel relatively certain that our respondents represent most bibliographic and curated institutions serving most regions in Wales.

Although our story times are mostly conducted in English, traditional Welsh language rhymes and songs are used in rhyme times.

Library Staff

There is a training issue coming. There are few younger Welsh-speaking storytellers and writers with the ability and experience to train others to tell stories in Welsh, from Welsh sources. That generation of tellers who does it now is getting on. CyMAL or someone needs to think about how to develop future workshop leaders or course instructors, so that there's a good quality of training in Welsh language storytelling provided to their staff.

Michael Harvey, Storyteller

What was encouraging was finding the amount of story time activities happening. Three-quarters of the respondents said story time activities happen frequently or regularly, with 51.3% reporting that such pastimes occur at least weekly if not daily for most of the year, and nearly 24% stating regular story times at certain times of the year, such as half term and summer holidays. Around 15% indicated story times occur infrequently, such as on special times in the calendar like St. David's Day, Hallowe'en, and World Book Day. Fewer than 10% said they never have story times.

Story times give an opportunity to increase children's love of books and reading and to make a library a place that is friendly and welcoming. It helps parents and carers form supportive friendships and introduces librarians and assistants as trusted adults.

Library Staff

2.2. Typical Content for Story Times in Welsh Institutions

The question is what happens during those story times, and whom these activities mostly serve. Such data would allow us to recommend aspects of story times that can be extended, or adapted to target specific groups who could be served better. This would provide CyMAL and senior management in museums, archives and libraries insight for improving or expanding services to the public, and

ideas for the professional development of staff, supported by practical advice suggested with this report in Section 3 and the Appendix.

The survey question offered ten categories of story time activities, asking respondents to indicate which they practiced and how frequently they did so. These described activities were:

- Oral stories told from memory
- Nursery rhymes, finger games, and singing / action games
- Book clubs or reading groups
- Summer reading games or challenges
- Literary stories told from memory or read aloud
- Histories, legends, oral history, biography, told from memory or read aloud.
- Table quizzes and trivia quizzes
- Picture books read aloud, with the illustrations shared
- Digital stories, videos/films, and computer games with narratives (either consumed or created by participants)
- Arts and crafts activities related to a book or oral narrative

2.3. Picture Book Storytelling

By far the activity most commonly practiced, and by the largest number of practitioners, was the reading aloud and sharing of picture books, as nearly 80% responded they mostly or regularly did so. Nursery rhymes, and singing and action games were the second most common activity, with close to 75% of the participants regularly or mostly carrying out these pastimes.

As a parent, I really miss good storytelling sessions for under-fives. In my area, these have become depressing. Qualified librarians are no longer available due to cuts. Staff clearly have no training, no enthusiasm for the job of story times, rhyme times, whatever they are meant to do. Libraries need to recruit staff who really enjoy working with children, in giving children this experience, whatever it is. Provision is spotty—some areas are good, some bad.

A Parent

This should come as no surprise, for the past four decades, at least, picture book readings along with participatory rhymes and songs have been a mainstay of library story times serving preschool and infant school children.

What is positive about these figures is that these particular activities remain widespread in Wales. Storytelling practices like reading aloud picture books and rhyme times are important for young children. Such experiences are particularly integral to developing their literacy, a love of literature, and knowledge of stories and narrative grammars, along with their concentration and other aspects of executive function. Participation in specific story time activities involving books and

enriched oral language plays a role in forming young children's social skills and enriches their imaginative play and cultural life.

The specialized story time activities designed for young children also serve the library. With regular attendance children develop a habit of visiting the venue, and looking at and reading books, and borrowing books and other items. Parents and older siblings, along with the younger children, are encouraged to join or continue as members of the library. The service therefore plays a major role in helping libraries meet their service remit to the community. Regular specialized story times in other institutions have similar potential to develop visitors, creating life-time users of museums or archives.

2.4. Other Kinds of Story Time Activities

Reported lower figures for the other story time activities do not necessarily indicate such activities are completely absent or less important in libraries, archives or museums. A good number of these less-practiced activities are present to a substantial level in many areas, even if not as common as picture book and rhyme time events. These instances provide evidence of both a good variety of events on offer by some libraries (and other institutions), and possibilities for the expansion of services.

We deliver mainly Rhymetime sessions throughout the year, and also have a programme of activities including crafts and story time to tie in with the Summer Reading Challenge during the holidays. Some branches have reading groups set up for children and/or adults. We provide story times for outside agencies such as playgroups, schools, etc.

Library Staff

For example, common activities found on an occasional basis are:

- Summer Reading Games (61% either run these regularly or make these the majority of their story time activity).
- Arts and crafts activities based on a book or oral narrative (35% sometimes do these, 55% regularly or mostly provide such experiences)
- Reading aloud or telling from memory literary stories (45% do this regularly or frequently) and Book Clubs and Reading groups (of which 40% run them regularly or frequently).

These are likely practices for the primary school age group (six to eleven year olds).

Studies show children drop in their reading scores, and fail to develop reading for pleasure as a habit, from around the age of eight

We always do a craft activity in story time that relates to the story told. We have a lot of positive feedback from parents, and are convinced that the preschool sessions are an essential part of our provision. They encourage families with young children into libraries—where the parents would not visit on their own account.

Librarian

years, when one sees a transition from learning to read to reading to learn. Reading challenges, book clubs, and oral performances are recognized strategies for supporting this age group in transition. Within these events there is orality; there may be no formal storytelling, but those taking part will be articulating narratives through summaries or by referencing, and reimagining stories read or heard in their discussions.

That other story time practices are not as prevalent as the picture book and rhyme time storytelling can be attributed to various factors:

- Lack of time due to staff numbers or scheduling
- Lack of resources, due to budget or method of allocating funding
- Lack of confidence and/or training among staff

However another possibility was raised. Some staff, along with storytellers and writers interviewed, believed there is less interaction between schools and libraries

and museums than there used to

be. The demands of the modern curriculum, the lack of funding for

visits, health and safety

requirements concerning the

number of adults needed to

accompany a group of children on

a trip and the fact few parents are

available to volunteer for this have all been given as reasons for a reduced number

of visits by schools to local

institutions. Many library staff

indicated it is increasingly difficult

for them to get into schools to do

book talks, storytelling, or promote

library activities like the summer

reading challenge; school

administrators tell them the

timetable is too tight to fit them in.

For several years I've worked closely with Pembrokeshire County Libraries, which support book weeks in schools. Librarians show up and encourage outcomes. She organises people, supports all those things, and makes links between libraries and schools and what happens in book week. But the library in some schools has effectively been disbanded. Some schools turned libraries to computer rooms, they're not conducive to reading or storytelling, the link with books is gone. The book week atmosphere is gone. Book week was linked with all kinds of other storytelling projects, because storytelling became a habit. What will be the impact of closures of libraries and school libraries? What will happen as a result, to the habit of reading and telling?

Mary Medlicott, Storyteller and Author

There's big challenge here. There's a weak link between what happens between librarians and teachers. If you want to increase the educational impact of the library, the person delivering the story and the person facilitating the basic activities and writing and so on need to be the same person. Kids ask for a story again and again. If you don't know that story, to the extent that you tell it, you can't do that link between storytelling and learning that can go on.

Michael Harvey, Storyteller

Boys and teachers report enjoying the 'Twelve Boys Tell' project, they're proud and pleased with their work. I visit schools, and the boys visit the library, and the boys who did the project regularly come to say hello, to talk to me, to talk about the project. Which is a good sign, it shows a good relationship between librarian and students.

Paul Doyle, Librarian and Reader Development & Literacy Project Officer

This is regrettable as

research, discussed later in greater detail in Section 3, indicates that storytelling,

story time activities, and the work of good library staff can provide immense support in helping children achieve literacy. This is definitely an area that CyMAL and related agencies and authorities can address. A way could be found to create stronger partnerships between schools, libraries and museums. We do not say that no such partnerships exist; in parts of Wales, they do. But there is no consistency across regions or within single authorities. In-service and pre-service training of teachers could, perhaps, make teachers more aware of the potential of other professionals with expertise in children's literature and storytelling to help them deliver their literacy schemes and encourage them in such partnerships.

That fewer than 8% of the respondents tell oral traditional stories from memory may seem discouraging to some, or proof that there is a minority interest in oral storytelling. But when one considers almost 54% *sometimes* do tell traditional stories orally from memory, then this suggests there is a base from which to expand services and increase activities which will appeal to more participants and develop greater use of library, museum and archive facilities. With a little training and creative planning in the placement and scheduling of staff, activities now aimed primarily at six to eleven year olds could include more oral storytelling among staff. We believe this can be practically achieved with minimal costs, from looking at experiences from schemes in other countries and the past.

Around 90 to 95% of the respondents indicated they never or only sometimes practiced telling or reading aloud histories and legends, or doing quizzes, and digital storytelling. Museum and archive staff host story time

Although we don't actively deliver storytelling I would love to be able to set up a workshop or ask a storyteller in to the local college to bring the joy to learners that I was lucky enough to receive on the CyMAL/CILIP storytelling course.

Library Staff

I wonder if there's a way of doing some kind of mentoring. I've noticed people really take storytelling on when they see some one experienced modelling it—then they get it's about interactions, not getting a script and learning a script, but the interaction.

Michael Harvey, Storyteller

I think that it would be beneficial to all if there were more training opportunities for staff in storytelling and more support especially for those new to public library work.

Library Staff

There's definitely potential to train museum staff in storytelling. The culture of some museums may prove a challenge. But there are always some staff natural for it. For example, years ago when I started working in the museum in Cathays Park there were guys who were skilled and watched people for a while, see what they were interested in. Then they'd sidle up to them and start to interact, point certain things out, and then visitors would walk to the next thing and naturally start to chat to staff about that, and that would naturally be narrative. There would be a genuine sharing of mini-narratives. And it was brilliant. They were doing it because they loved their work and all that.

Michael Harvey, Storyteller

events less frequently than librarians. When museum and archive staff do such events they are more likely to just tell or read aloud folk tales or ghost stories rather than play games, relate histories and legends, or create digital stories. Yet quizzes, digital storytelling, and the performance of histories and legends have great potential in museums in archives. They can incorporate the knowledge on display, and direct the visitor's gaze back so they examine the content on exhibition with greater insight.

These are activities that could highlight collections, allowing participants to experience more fully the services that museums and archives provide, and see how they are relevant to the visitor. It is not only historical sites that share contexts with legends and biographies. So, too, can science museums by taking *porquois* stories (why or 'just-so' tales) and creation myths, or the lives of famous scientists, inventors, engineers, and mathematicians, as starting points for investigations and experiments. They are also activities library staff could incorporate in their programmes.

2.5. Languages Used in Story Times

In terms of the language spoken in story time activities, 64% were usually in English and around 35% of those providing story time activities used both Welsh and English. Only 1% of the story time practitioners spoke only Welsh. It would confirm that library, archive and museum staff communicate regularly in both Welsh and English with the public,

Story times are mostly in English but we have done Welsh language sessions for local schools on request. We are introducing Welsh rhymes into our usual story times as a result of Twf training. We aim holiday story times at all primary school age children, but it's unusual to see a child older than 8 attend. Ten years ago we'd get 12 year olds asking to join in, but now they would rather use the PCs.

Library Staff

and we believe these figures reflect the current language situation, and population distribution of Welsh and English speakers, in Wales. But also it suggests that it is worth supporting more Welsh-only and Welsh-English bilingual activities through story times.

2.6. Users and Audiences

Looking at who is served by story times draws up some interesting figures. As one might expect, given the earlier figures indicating that most story time

Children are often given the choice of which story they would like told or read for story times in our library.

Library Staff

activities in these institutions are based on reading aloud and sharing the illustrations of picture books, younger children are the main audiences. With 84% of the respondents saying story times are regularly or mostly for children under the age of five, it would appear primarily an activity for the youngest.

However, when looking collectively at how much story times are for five to seven year olds and eight to eleven year olds, 62% say story times are regularly or mostly the key stage one group, while nearly 48% say storytelling is regularly or mostly for the key stage two group. If we include the number who say story time activities are *sometimes* for these three age groups, then 94% report that story times are sometimes, regularly or mostly for under fives, 94% for five to seven year olds, and 92% for eight to eleven year olds. Thus story time activities are considered appropriate and an important part of library services for all children, of all ages, even though under-fives' story times are given precedence.

And at first glance the figures indicate museum, archive and library staff do not provide story time activities to teens or adults. Even so, while 47% claim never

to provide storytelling for 11 to 15 years, 52% sometimes or regularly do so. And although 54% say they never provide story time activities for senior citizens,

44.7% sometimes or regularly do such programmes for the elderly. As our definition of story time activities includes book groups, authors' visits, and reading challenges it is likely that the nature of

programming for these two groups is primarily made up of these pastimes.

So the age groups offered the least amount of story time activities are the young adults, aged 16 to 18 years, and adults aged 18 and older. However, 20% respondents report that sometimes they provide storytelling to young adults and around 30% to adults, presumably in the form of authors' talks and book groups.

This is an assumption about the nature of activities for all these age groups. Given the limits of time and practical aspects in this study we could not ascertain the exact range of activities provided for each age group. One should remember that

Our museum intends to increase its story time sessions, in particular as a service outside of school term time. The one stumbling block that we find is that schools are often restricted on the number of outside activities they can arrange or afford.

Museum Staff

Our storytelling activities have been primarily conducted by the umbrella organisation—this year we are conducting market research in order to gauge public interest in further developing this area of work. The museum's permanent displays include many oral histories and digital stories and we believe there is scope as there are no shortages of ideas.

Museum Staff

now many professional storytellers and performance poets in Wales regularly perform for older teenagers and for adults, not only in libraries and museums but also in arts centres, theatres, pubs and similar venues.

The average sized audience for story time activities for any age is clearly between ten and thirty participants. Around 48% of those replying to our survey

indicate their story times serve around ten to twenty listeners, and around 24% say their programmes serve twenty to thirty participants. Approximately 24% say they have around ten or under attending story times, and almost none have groups larger than 30 individuals. Considering the usual

We have a Monmouthshire Shared Reading organisation consisting of library staff and volunteers who go to groups in libraries, and in Elderly People Homes and in the prison. We also have Intergenerational Groups.

Library Staff

In relation to story time activities for adults/senior citizens, a reading group meets once a month on the Library premises, during library opening hours.

Library Staff

type of space for story times (a children's reading or story corner, or a community room in libraries, and a gallery or education room in museums or archives) the maximum any space could hold comfortably would usually be about thirty.

That nearly a quarter of the programmes serve ten or fewer is of concern; it could be these are in very small rural libraries which cannot hold more than this, or that they are in areas of severe social deprivation with hard-to-reach children and families.

Most good librarians are doing this; they're going to speak at parents groups at schools, particularly when children are starting school for the first time. Invite the new intake to the library; tell them and their parent's stories.

However, this figure could indicate concerns about promoting services, and/or the need for better planning or delivery of programmes. Such issues might be resolved through training or by adopting other institutions' models of good practice. Another consideration regarding numbers attending story time programmes is the potential for serving larger crowds by

Re-education and outreach, for building audiences and users, to me that is the big thing is crèches and day centres, especially in working class areas. Lots of people leaving their children there from morning until night. It's a good way to reach those children, and they need it, library staff reaching out to them with storytelling.

The thing about Book Start and Shure Start, they've used Health Centres and Health Visitors, whom these hard-to-reach people have to see. The libraries could reach these through them. Health Centres, where people take children for check ups, get the information there.

As regards to audiences for adult events, again you need to look where people go in the community. Leaflet coffee shops, go out to people and say we can do this, we can offer something out of the library and invite people back in then. Local history societies, genealogy groups, they're very keen now to know history and stories with TV shows like "Who Do You Think You Are?" and so on. That's a good way to get people looking at family stories. Linking storytelling and genealogy and family history, that's a great way into storytelling.

Liz Weir, Storyteller and Librarian

occasionally appointing professional storytellers, authors, performance poets and/or drama or puppet companies. Many of these have the skills to perform for sixty to a hundred listeners, and if the building has the facilities to accommodate such numbers the use of these professionals could be a means for expanding story time activities to serve special events or as a drive to raise awareness of or membership in the services.

2.7. Who Delivers Story Time Activities

With regards to who delivers story time activities, the responses indicate clearly that in libraries it is mostly library assistants and librarians. The findings indicate story times are regularly or mostly provided by library assistants (74% of the time) or librarians (45% of the time). Around 41% of the librarians sometimes

provide story times, which means a significant number are able or trained to do so and it is probably due to the changing role of librarians that story times are left more to library assistants.

Museum and archive staff indicate that the majority do almost no story time programmes. The work

is left to a few in each institution. That free-lance professional storytellers, poets and writers are sometimes used,

according to over 70% of the respondents, could mean any story time activities happening in museums and archives are carried out mostly by these professionals.

However, as it was impractical to set up a questionnaire to ascertain a detailed breakdown of how free-lance professionals are used across

You train the person up, then we move to sustainability. Make sure that person who's trained can go out to guest in some other library branch. You come to Branch A, I go to Branch B. Line up staff to go out 3 times, gain experience, at local playgroups, preschools, whatever audience you can find.

But you have to make sure people know how to behave when a visiting teller comes. How does staff organise the children? Adults in the branch need to be involved. There's a lot of other training to go on—not just learning the story but how other staff help manage and support the story time. This is what stops people doing it or they don't do the management and wonder why storytelling doesn't succeed.

Liz Weir, Storyteller and Librarian

There's such a lot of potential that has lain unrecognised up and down the land. You don't want or need celebrity storytellers. You want a mother who has 3 hours spare a week, a young guy who's maybe interested in acting who wants to get to know how to work in a local community way, you want an elderly person now retired but who already has a love of storytelling or stories for children. You're not going to want for lack of staffing for such a scheme. What you need is storytellers to train people a bit, and you want a library system with a bit of funding.

The Lambeth Storytelling Scheme in the 1970s was a great model. Some downgrade it because it involved picture books as a fundamental part, too. But to those of us who did it realized very quickly, you might be presenting books but you had to be a storyteller to make it work.

Mary Medlicott, Storyteller and Author

Wales, it is possible that storytellers and writers supplement programmes to a similar degree in all three sectors.

One final comment on who delivers story times. Around a quarter of the respondents reported they sometimes use volunteers for these events. While these volunteers are mostly in museums, and to a lesser extent in libraries, it is a group to consider in future planning and training should CyMAL or individual Welsh museums, libraries and archives wish to expand story time programmes.

2.8. Rational for Story Time Activities

By far the biggest reason for providing story time activities was to promote reading for pleasure, with nearly 88% saying this was very important or essential, while over 83% said it was very important or essential to have story time programmes to develop and support literacy. Nearly 80% also believe story times are important or essential for language learning. However the reasons for providing any service are complex. Those answering our questionnaire also indicated that 84% consider story times very important or essential for promoting their services, and just over 85% believe story times are important or essential for increasing visitor and/or user numbers. This study did not include in its remit a means to ascertain whether such opinions regarding the impact of story times on increased visitor/user numbers are true. But as our respondents were professionals with, collectively, considerable years of practice in fields that regularly monitor the impact of their services, including keeping track of the number of visitors and users, then we believe that their experiences are sufficient evidence. Story times have an impact on literacy and reading habits, and in promoting institution's services so as to increase numbers.

Around 40% thought story times were very important in promoting collections and exhibitions, and 43% that such activities are somewhat important for enhancing the appreciation for or understanding of exhibits and collections. This is a sizeable minority and hints are possibilities for future development, either in training or in experimenting with story time activities to do these things.

One of the most encouraging elements in the responses to this section was that 67% of those answering our survey believed it was essential or very important that they do story time activities because they enjoy them. It is integral to the

success of any story time activity that all the participants, including the one telling the story or leading other activities, enjoy themselves.

3.0. Recommendations for Further Support and for Expansion

Deprive a child of love and he will reach for affection or clamour for attention at the expense of all other aspirations. Deprive him of fantasy and he may try, on his own, to make up even for that deficit. But children who are not spoken to by live and responsive adults will not learn to speak properly. Children who are not answered will stop asking questions. They will become incurious. And children who are not told stories and who are not read to will have few reasons for wanting to learn to read. The advocates of electronic shortcuts to literacy do not understand the storyteller's function.

Gail E. Haley 1971 Caldecott Award Speech

The findings of the survey and interviews indicate that potential exists in all sectors to build on story time practices in Wales, either by developing or refining current activities, or introducing new strategies and events. This is assuming frontline staff, senior management, and Welsh government are in agreement and supportive of such efforts. While library and museum staff across Wales are commended for keeping up story time activities of a wide variety for many sectors of the population (particularly for younger and primary school aged children), there are still some districts with few or no story time activities, and in all authorities there are sectors of the public who could enjoy additional story time provision. Story time activities can also play a role in achieving desired educational attainment and contributing to stronger community ties.

3.1 Supportive Evidence for Expanding Story Time Practices

Before suggesting a general outline of practical, affordable strategies for expanding story time activities it would be useful to review literature exploring the role and influence of storytelling in society. The human is a storytelling animal. We think and communicate in narrative. Memories take narrative shape, narrative grammars inform our knowledge and help us navigate our way through life (Tomasello, 1999; Konner, 2010; Gottschall, 2012).

Archives, museums and libraries have been developed to identify and store these narratives in such a way that they are accessible, useful, and meaningful to all. Besides accumulating, categorizing, storing and making these narratives available to

the public it could be argued that such institutions have an opportunity, even a responsibility, to promote narratives, to offer them up to public analysis and experimentation. This not only reminds the public of the purpose and potential of such institutions, thereby increasing membership and use of their services: proactive work with all kinds storytelling available to museums, archives and libraries will stimulate minds, old and young, to society's benefit.

A concrete example of this regards the role of the wider community in achieving universal literacy. The PISA Survey (*the Programme for International Student Assessment*) assesses the knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds in maths, reading and science and was developed jointly by member countries of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). In the UK PISA is run by the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER). Wales's recent participation in this study reported challenging results:

The PISA assessments of 15-year olds show Wales falling further behind since the 2006 tests. Wales ranked lowest of the UK countries. Of the 67 countries taking part Wales was ranked 38th for reading, 40th for maths, and 30th for the tests for science.

7 December 2010 BBC News Wales
Naturally many in Wales are concerned with these scores, and as a response to these findings, the Welsh Government's Department of Education initiated various actions concerning curriculum, exams, teacher training, and school inspections.¹

Research, and long experience, has demonstrated that schools alone cannot achieve a high rate of literacy. As Jim Sells of the National Literacy Trust and others have remarked, it takes a community of readers to create young readers. Learning to read does not begin in reception with basic decoding lessons, nor does it finish as Key Stage Two starts when educators take the view that at around age eight children move from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn'. Maryanne Wolf, in

'Learning to read begins the first time an infant is held and read a story. How often this happens, or fails to happen, in the first five years of childhood turns out to be one of the best predictors of later reading. A little-discussed class system invisibly divides our society, with those families that provide their children environments rich in oral and written language opportunities gradually set apart from those who do not, or cannot.... Children who never have a story read to them, who never hear words that rhyme, who never imagine fighting with dragons or marrying a prince, have the odds overwhelmingly against them.'

Maryanne Wolf

¹ See also <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/120629pisabookleten.pdf> and <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/english/improving-skills-and-education-attainment/>

Proust and the Squid, a history of the reading mind, points out that ‘We were never born to read. Human beings invented reading only a few thousand years ago. And with this invention, we rearranged the very organisation of our brain, which in turn expanded the ways we were able to think, which altered the intellectual evolution of our species (2007).’

We are born to listen, speak, see and use our hands. And we seem to be born to listen to and tell stories. These innate abilities are the building blocks of storytelling and, eventually, reading. Those of any age or reading ability who listen to stories, when they are totally absorbed in the experience, are in a mental state that is the same as that of a fluent reader lost in a book. Thinking and real reading are the same. That is, when one is a fluent reader one becomes less conscious of the marks on the page and physical exertions involved with holding and looking at a book. The written word is quickly translated in the mind into images, sensations and sounds so that one is more conscious of these thoughts, and becomes engaged in the story as much as if it were happening in real life.

This does not just happen by accident, but takes years of practice and experimenting, of developing fine and gross motor skills, hand and eye coordination, a sense of balance. Equally important is cultivating the imagination, along with positive emotional experiences motivating one to want to read and to read more. Listening to stories artfully told or read aloud builds those thought processes, contributing to the development of synapses that link the billions of neurons, or brain cells.

‘In a new brain, synapses form at a rate of three billion a second. These windows of development occur in phases from birth to age twelve when the brain is very actively learning from the environment. It is during this period...that the foundations for thinking, language, vision, attitudes, aptitudes, and other characteristics are laid down.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Early Head Start National Resource Centre @Zero to Three

Many studies, including one by Lauren Brown, indicate that this development works best when it relies on some kind of human interaction, such as when storytelling takes place. Brown (1989) found that the oral medium helped develop language and the skills requisite to reading, and that visual literacy, while equally important, does not support reading in the same way creative oral interactions between people do.

Libraries, museums and archives are all well placed to support children's and

adult literacy in Wales and, in particular, to provide the positive emotional experiences to make a nation of tellers, listeners, and readers. According to the above evidence, children lacking experiences such as oral

storytelling, reading aloud, rhyme

times and so on (both within family contexts and public and school experiences) fall behind in literacy development, as well as in the development of other cognitive and social skills. The so-called 'Matthew effect' (where according to that Gospel the 'rich become richer and the poor poorer') is the description given that means that these children never catch-up (Fecica and O'Neill).

The benefits of pleasurable enriched oral language experiences do not end when a child passes the age of five. Primary and secondary school aged children require as much to convince them of the pleasures of narrative, told or written, for these activities to become automatic. Such convictions only arise from experiences and habits of mind that engage them fully. Evidence suggests that storytelling experiences aid in developing the older child's ability to visualize and imagine (to develop what is called mental simulations), and also assist in developing empathy, critical thinking, and concentration. All kinds of story time activities do this, and so the provision of summer reading challenges, children's book groups, and occasional storytelling sessions, authors' visits and poetry performances remain vital services.

Students in key stages two and three who are disaffected and poor readers have seen reading improve through participation in storytelling projects. These trained older students in disadvantaged schools to tell stories. Repeatedly over the last 20 years such schemes saw students' reading ages rise by 2.3. to 3.0 years, and/or these students' library membership and use increase. Teachers report students participating in storytelling projects exhibit much improved concentration,

I work with asylum seeker and refugee and immigrant ethnic minority families. Mostly as schools work, organised and funded by LEAs. I teach the ethnic minority adults to tell stories, to their children, for their own development. We have ethnic minority storytelling clubs for families, where adults and children come to the school after school and share stories. I tell stories, they tell stories. The afterschool storytelling clubs, they tell bilingually, they can tell in English or a language of their choice, and interpreters are there to translate to others. It's lovely what happens in school storytelling clubs. It's organised by the LEA but the parenting course and other events sometimes happen libraries—lots more work like this could be done in libraries.

Cath Little, Storyteller and Singer

with enhanced writing skills and they attribute the storytelling to better critical literacy and executive function.²

Bibliographic and curated institutions also play an important role in developing local knowledge and identity. These are 'literacies' of a type that are sometimes neglected in a globalized world. Many families are now uprooted, living in dormitory communities convenient for work but not necessarily where the adults grew up knowing each other.

One of my hugest concerns as a Welsh storyteller is the lack of grip on what is broadly in Wales called Curriculum Cyreig. You'll find it said by Mererid Hopwood and John Evans as well. Any artistic mind in Wales needs this, but we're losing touch with the locality in Wales, which is hugely important in Welsh Culture. Through storytelling, knowledge of tradition, culture, geography, history, characters, people and all that can be maintained.

Mary Medlicott, Storyteller and Author

Children don't roam independently as much as in the past, exploring local areas and gaining a sense of place. Libraries, museums, and archives provide destinations for people to meet, and store the information conveying knowledge of local history. Story time activities for all ages can celebrate and disseminate this knowledge of place, and a sense of belonging, to a variety of ages. By providing the space and reason for meetings, and encouraging social acts of gathering to hear and share stories, members of a community can help each other compensate for any alienation or sense of displacement.

Public libraries and museums have been instrumental in making the population computer literate, through provision of free or cheap access to equipment and the internet, as well as ICT training. A concern amongst educators, universities and employers has been indiscriminate downloading of material from the net, with little awareness of how

A lot of libraries have a bank of computers, so you can have a professional storyteller or digital storyteller work over several one-hour sessions with the public and key staff. Then have the library staff take over the digital storytelling. There are camera apps, which any child can work, and download onto library computers, making digital stories together that way. Even the least technical staff can pick up on that. You can create and have a complete story there with pictures and everything, the children and seniors using the library will love that.

Liz Weir, storyteller and librarian

content on one website is more or less relevant than another. Combined and/or complementary practices of oral storytelling, creative writing, digital storytelling and library and museum use are important in the development of critical and digital

² Refer to: 1. *Listen Up!*, Verbal Arts Centre storytelling scheme in N. Ireland; Reports on *Kick into Reading*, *Sports Stories*, *Dad's and Lads*, *Reading Champions*, and *Junior Reading Champions*, National Literacy Trust (NLT); *Writing Together and Class Writing*, National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE); *Active Learning Project* by Artforms Leeds, and articles by: Fecica and O'Neill (2010), Ryan (2012), referenced in the bibliography

literacies: that is, the ability to judge the value and relevance of written, aural, and visual and/or digital content in any media. For this reason story time activities continue to provide opportunities for libraries, archives and museums to support old and new practices, a vital social service as identified by Harry Farr in 1910.

3.2 Potential Expansion and Development: Specific Suggestions

The following summary suggests specific proposals for each sector. The reader will find there is much overlap, and this is important to remember in the subsequent sub-section discussing practical means for implementing any of these suggestions.

3.2 (a) Libraries

- More story time activities for primary school aged children (6 to 10 years) (particularly oral storytelling, but also book groups with readings by authors and performance poets, digital storytelling activities, and table quizzes and other challenging games that are fun and simultaneously develop their critical thinking and knowledge)
- More story time activities for secondary school students (specialist tellers, staff storytelling, performance poets, authors' readings, quizzes and fun competitive challenges for this age group)
- Storytelling projects for teenagers (digital storytelling, and volunteer storytelling to younger children)
- Story projects for adults and senior citizens in various forms, such as:
 - Storytelling / stories read aloud by participants, staff, or guest artists as a part of some book group or authors visits
 - Occasional story performances for adults by professional storytellers, performance poets, and readings by authors
 - Oral history projects
 - Digital storytelling to explore local or family history
 - Storytelling by especially recruited part-time staff and/or amateurs/volunteers (senior citizens on their own, and/or along side students, NEETs, young parents, etc.)

3.2 (b) Museums

- Employment of professional storytellers for special events and exhibits
- Employment of professional tellers for staff/volunteer training
- More storytelling of all kinds by staff and volunteers
- Digital storytelling experts to work with staff and/or public
- Providing spaces for storytelling groups and individuals to present performances and/or workshops that these develop

3.2 (c) Archives

- Professional storytellers in short-term residence to conduct research on materials and present them in public performances, publications and/or

recordings so as to promote and raise awareness of archives' collections and services

- Engage digital storytelling experts to develop and train staff and/or public in this art form so as to make greater use of archive materials and allow for wider dissemination and of archives' contents

Note: All of these suggestions, and can happen through collaboration between local libraries, archives and/or museums, and partnerships with LEAs, local youth groups, senior citizens' groups, parents' and carers' groups and similar organisations and agencies.

Most reading this report will have a clear idea from their own experiences of how story time activities fit in a public library. These ideas will relate, primarily to the under-fives story times and some practices involving primary school children. For a more detailed sketch of what or how story time activities could involve secondary school students and adults, please refer to models described in Appendix II.

Some may have more difficulty comprehending expanded or additional story time activities in museums and archives. There are three types of storytelling that would appear most appropriate for museums and galleries:

- Static performances of oral storytelling (relating either traditional or original works, or both, based upon or inspired by displayed objects or the history of those objects.) (N.B. this can range from highly formal performance, or extremely informal narration communicated by staff to visitors through conversation)
- A story trail or the walking or guided tour (Promenade Storytelling), consisting of stories performed 'on the hoof' as groups are led through a gallery, field site, or building (similar to the ghost walks in Cardiff and other city centres, or the Jack the Ripper tour in London)
- Digital storytelling (by staff, or by the public) supported and facilitated initially by digital storytelling agencies, and, as the activities evolve, with a focus on local history, or genealogy or other family stories, etc. carried out by the public with support of archive, museum or library staff

Appendix II summarizes one museum official's comprehensive report on story time

practices in museums in Wales, and also examples from others regarding storytelling work in museums, historic sites, and archives both in Wales and other parts.

There's great potential for future development in museums: train staff, using storytellers, train them to do walking tours of museums and Cadw sites. Guided tours, too, with stories focused upon or inspire by specific objects or features would enhance visits. Funding to help tellers and trainers research that material would be needed but once started it could really go well.

Cath Little, Storyteller and Singer

Many works of art portray a narrative (classical Greek or Roman myths, for example, or an historic incident or a social context in another century). An object (be it painting, sculpture, piece of engineering, or part of an historical monument) will have a story behind it: how it came to be made, or something

The best museum work...has always been linked specifically with an exhibition. You've got this nice dialogue with the material that you're working with, and this special event.... Museums often try always to explain and the great thing about the Art, Ritual and Death exhibition was that there was a whole lot of stuff and no one new what it was for. That was the interesting thing—where you're not taking on or part of the exegesis of the museum. You're a part of the 'Wow!'

Michael Harvey, Storyteller

significant about the life of the person or people who created or used it. Objects can inspire narratives, leading to especially created spoken or written narratives.

Whereas museum curators and education officers have a responsibility to portray their collections authentically, honestly and factually, it is arguably as valid to permit fiction to frame an object or subject in a museum. Some people do visit museums for pure research; many of the visiting public use museums recreationally. They want to acquire knowledge, but part of the experience provides a means to relax, of letting the mind wander with associative thoughts and emotions triggered by encounters and interactions with objects, displays, architecture, and individuals in that space.

I do a lot of storytelling for the National Museum in Cathays Park. Lots of it is in the natural history gallery, with all the animals on display so that's great for animal stories. Mostly it's related to themes of a special exhibition. I did train volunteers to tell and read aloud stories related to the Anthony Browne exhibition. The museums are mostly family audiences so storytelling is a great thing to do there.

Cath Little, Storyteller and Singer

Told stories created by a teller, inspired by a certain object (even if the story conveys no specific fact) can prompt listeners to look more closely at the subject, to question and then rely on the information the museum or archive provides. Such storytelling also provides a model of thinking, encouraging visitors to speculate about what they see, and to link what they see to stories they already know (memories of earlier significant life events and experiences, and

One of the most enjoyable weeks of storytelling that I did in the recent past was a little museum.... I worked in the space given but I realized a crucial thing would be connection with the objects in all the small rooms of the museum. And I thought a way I could inspire the children to get thinking about objects...to stimulate their looking. I brought objects in, let them choose and get involved with objects. And then of course told stories about those things. Sometimes the object would symbolize a folktale or myth I wanted to tell. Sometimes there would be a story about the object, about the real story. I would recommend that to museums—that they don't just have a storyteller because storytelling is fun. They actually use the storyteller to stimulate real interest in what is around.

Mary Medlicott, Storyteller and Author

knowledge acquired over the years). This experience of reverie arising out of associative thoughts is a common outcome of museum visits, and an important

experience for all ages, prompting various mental processes: linguistic, scientific, communicative, historical, relational. It leads to a state cognitive scientists refer to variously as 'flow', a 'hypnogogic trance state', and/or 'liminal mental states'. Experiencing such states contributes to physical and mental health, as well as intellectual development and attainment of knowledge.

3.3. Practicalities: Making It Happen

This report is merely a platform for discussion. Its aim is to create a picture of current practices and frame them so that possibilities for maintenance, expansion or change are clear. The proposals listed in the previous section are suggestions. However, it would be irresponsible to make such proposals without in some way advising how they might be made practical.

To do so, this report relies on models of good practice in Wales and other locales, as well as the experience and expertise of storytellers, writers, digital artists, librarians, archivists and museum staff both within and outside of Wales. Putting the above proposals into practice can be broken down into the following areas:

- Building on What is Already There
- Partnerships
- Outsourcing

3.3.(a) Building on What is Already There

As indicated there are substantial story time activities already happening in Wales. These are all platforms on which to build. Senior management must first engage and motivate staff so they want to do more story time activities. Where interest in storytelling currently exists those members of staff should be identified and provided support and encouragement. Where possible staff should be offered initial training and continuing professional development.

Training can come about in three ways:

- Contracting professional tellers with experience in leading continuing professional development (there are many such practitioners living or working in Wales)
- Peer-review or co-operative training (that is, experienced staff being given time and resources to support, teach, and advise inexperienced fellow staff)
- The use of external agencies to train and support staff, such as CyMAL's accredited course on storytelling, and agencies such as CILIP, Beyond the

Border, Literature Wales, GEECS, the Reading Agency, National Literacy Trust and so on.

Although there are expenses incurred in all these strategies, savings can be made through partnerships (*discussed in the following section 3.3.(b)*).

Additional story time activities, for a wider range of the public, would suggest there will be additional costs or at

least greater demands made on staff. Another risk in expanding story time activities relates to maintaining quality of services. It is particularly challenging to staff, especially inexperienced staff, to develop rapidly a substantial and varied repertoire of stories, material

We developed a training and planning scheme in Belfast. Each branch developed 5 story programmes. Then you swap them around the system. Most systems have something like 10 branches, so when each branch develops 5 programmes you have 50 programmes. That keeps you going through the year. Not everybody will like the same stories, so encourage the different interests. Develop programmes based around themes: dogs, horses, holidays, seasons, sports, toys. There are so many packages based on themes that can be prepared and made ready. Other members of staff could be made aware of these programmes, kits can be made that are easy to pick up so someone could fill in at the last minute. A catalogue of resources could be made up, put on line, or people could meet and swap 2 or 3 times a year.

Liz Weir, Storyteller and Librarian

to read aloud, and plan other story time activities. However, none of these concerns need be insurmountable.

With careful, flexible planning much can be achieved in a short space of time with limited staff. Drawing upon successful storytelling schemes of the past, if senior management can identify an enthusiastic member of staff in each branch of a library or in an archive or museum department, several individuals can form a group or team.

Going to libraries, always, the staff are nice, enthusiastic, supportive. They want storytelling to happen. They want authors visits, storyteller visits. They make them work, and have a great impact. But in recent years it becomes more and more clear that library staff are more and more under-resourced and over-worked.

Daniel Morden, Storyteller and Author

That 'team' is then trained and supported (along with other authorities' cohorts, so as to create an economy of scale and so minimize training costs). Individuals in each team could coordinate what material each one learns and uses.

If ten staff form a 'story time team', and each person learns five stories and prepares five picture books to read aloud (each individual choosing ten titles different from others' choices). The 'team' would end up with 100 stories to share. Repeated telling would allow them to specialize, to refine their material and performance skills. Other skills could be developed (for example, those who speak Welsh, Polish, Urdu or other languages in the community could be encouraged to

practice bilingual storytelling). Ancillary activities could be developed (quizzes, arts and craft materials related to particular titles).

By alternating team members in the ten branches each week an entire authority would have a year's worth of polished, varied story times. In the case of a museum or archive, this model might only yield a team of 3 or 4 tellers and fewer stories, but the same strategy applies. The additional advantage to coordinating repertoires and skills is that it provides for cover in cases of illness and holidays.

Not that it is necessary to have a weekly story time. Many libraries and museums aim to, but these are difficult to maintain in terms of quality; burnout is a potential hazard. Better management

would be to target specific seasons or periods for story times, and promote this to users. Admittedly, with under five story times many parents and carers have come to expect, even demand, weekly meetings, looking to them as much as for social purposes as for hearing stories. To support them, institutions might stress the benefit of having breaks (but making sure those breaks are used by staff to improve and add material to the story

Some libraries, quite frankly, have these dreary weekly sessions where one week when you tell you might have 5, the next week 20, the next none. Much better to stand back and ask "Is this the best way? Am I better putting efforts into having, say, six really good storytelling sessions a year that we can promote and get good audiences?" They can be seasonal and thematic, targeted, instead of the model being that as libraries we do story times for such and such an age group every day, every week, that don't necessarily work.

One of the problems is that library planners don't get the timing right. As tellers you and I have done sessions scheduled so that even the fastest runner in the world isn't capable of dropping kids at school and getting to the library, or picking them up from school and getting them there. By the time they've gone home, had a snack pushed their sister in the buggy it's 6 and time for tea. Do a bedtime story time! I've done these, everyone comes in pyjamas, it's lovely, from 7 to 8 o'clock. They fall asleep, almost, and the adults carry them home. Everyone wants to come because it's different, special.

Liz Weir, Storyteller and Librarian

time activities). During the short intervals between scheduled story times, parents and carers could be encouraged to develop their own story practices; they could be given space to meet and socialize, and provided with workshops and training for family storytelling. Again, there is precedent for this in Wales and many professional tellers have worked with LEAs, charities, libraries and/or other agencies to develop parents', grandparents', and carers' storytelling skills.

Successful story time practices need support of all staff. A number of staff may not want to tell stories or will not see engaging children or adults in this way as a primary aim of their job. Yet all do contribute. Although not all are leading a story time, other staff must cover ongoing services. Flexibility and good teamwork, which

local services are recognized for, are essential for successful development of story time activities. An understanding needs to be encouraged that even those who don't lead story times still support such events. With knowledge of these services, all staff can promote events enthusiastically, and build fuller participation with the community. It is hoped that the evidence and ideas presented in this report will provide management with information to motivate teams in this way.

Similarly, other staff may be better at promoting and advertising the story time activities, which is vital to their success. Such programmes are especially important for hard-to-reach families

and young people. Many authorities are making use of new social networks, local media, and do still maintain effective systems of leaflets, word-of-mouth promotions and notices in the local shops. One of the most successful means of recruiting audiences remains visits

There's no point in librarians organising events and then sitting back and saying 'No one ever comes!' They have to be proactive at getting people in. Networking is the most important thing. Have figures on all your playgroups, parent and toddler groups, all Sure-Start groups, all your children's centres and family centres. Have info on pensioners' groups and Age Concern, as well, for any adult storytelling you want to do. Contacts also for adult groups with potential interest—book groups, poetry slam and stand up comic nights in the area. You need to have that data. What's stopping a lot of people is lack of direct contact. Staff were prepared to make personal visits but with staff shortages, people find that harder. But you have to get out and do personal visits, and know whom to get word to.

Liz Weir, Storyteller and Librarian

by museum, library and archive staff to local schools, early childhood centres, drop-in centres, leisure/sport/recreation centres, and similar venues to speak to the target audiences and encourage attendance at future events.

Many previous, successful models of practice could be replicated or adapted in museums, libraries and archives in Wales. In Appendix II there is a list of activities, schemes, projects and programmes with brief descriptions, and comments from some of their practitioners, upon which CyMAL and senior management in curated and bibliographic institutions may wish to draw.

3.3.(b) Partnerships

Another vital ingredient for expanding story time activities is through partnerships. These can be partnerships within or between authorities, with groups of libraries, museums, and/or archives working together. Partnerships can be with other organisations, agencies and individuals delivering similar or related services, or sharing a philosophy and an interest in the aims and objectives of the institution. Besides allowing for an expansion of delivery, partnerships can also help with raising

funds or managing costs. For example, at the moment museums in Wales are delivering storytelling events and projects in various ways. Some are training staff to

do storytelling. A significant number engage professional storytellers, when they can, to deliver storytelling performances or projects in their museums, or to

The Museum of Archaeology is moving to St. Fagan's and staff are very keen—that transition is a massive opportunity. How do you display archaeology so that it's not just sticking it in boxes? The other mad thing of high technology and stage lighting, that's just another kind of box. They want to build on the storytelling experience they have.

Michael Harvey, Storyteller

train their staff to do so. There is potential to coordinate bookings of professional tellers or other narrative artists with local libraries, or to develop training sessions for both museum and library staff.

Cadw, the Welsh government's historic environment service, also regularly engages storytellers to perform at its sites, or to be resident at a site where they perform and also encourage visitors to share stories, and to have professional storytellers train their staff in storytelling.

Cadw staff are interested in storytelling, too, there should be training there for them. I do storytelling at a Cadw site, a miners' village of the 1920s. I tell stories to those visiting the museum, but I also listen to the people's stories, I get those visiting to tell their stories.

Cath Little, Storyteller and Singer

There is already some overlap in activities and personnel (particularly with regards to free-lance professional storytellers being hired in). It would certainly make great sense for libraries, museums, and *Cadw* to coordinate efforts. Several museums along with *Cadw* might fund jointly a storytelling course for staff, with individuals from both sectors participating.

Similarly, Llenyddiaeth Cymru / Literature Wales is often a partner with libraries and education authorities, providing funds to place a storyteller or writer in a library venue where school children visit. Literature Wales' current priority is the development of creating writing by children and young people, and so requires a written component to any visit. But it would be in the interest of all parties to work closely, so that strategic use of storytellers, writers, poets, digital artists, dramatists, puppeteers and illustrators complement each others work in the school, museum, archive and library sectors.

It would be for senior management in these institutions, or in their local authorities, along with CyMAL staff to make the case for the importance of speaking and listening processes inherent in the development of writing and reading practices. Evidence indicates that a lack of healthy, sustained range of enriched oral-

language experiences results in a paucity of vocabulary, sentence structures and narrative grammars, which can inhibit meaningful creative writing. Whatever the medium, be it writing fiction, fact or poetry, creating drama and film, or digital storytelling, there is the necessity to talk at some stage in these creative endeavors: that is, to be able to both tell and to recognize and discuss narratives.

Other useful partners in Wales in the development of story time activities are Beyond the Border, StoryWorks, and the George Ewart Evans Centre. All provide expertise, and often schedule relevant artists and academics. Sometimes they are in the position to help with funding, or serve as partners in applying for funds that would not be accessible to an individual local government department.

There are numerous other agencies with whom the curated and bibliographic sectors could work. Many already do: most libraries buy in the *Summer Reading Challenge* developed and distributed by the Reading Agency. Others make use of CyMAL's, CILIP's, the YLG's and SLA's and the National Literacy Trust's services when it comes to training, provision of materials or resources, external evaluation and assessments, and/or general and specific advice. These are listed in Appendix II.

Finally, two other sources for fruitful, important partnerships exist for Museums, Archives and Libraries. One lies in the use of free-lance professional storytellers, writers, poets, digital storytellers, and other artists who specialize in activities associated with story times such as puppetry, drama, film and illustration. The other resides in the use of the volunteer sector. To an extent, however, these (and many of the agencies listed above) can also lead to or be seen as outsourcing, which is the third route to making suggestions in this report practicable.

3.3.(c) Outsourcing

In many ways, long before it was conceived as being so, museums, archives and libraries relied on outsourcing certain services. Since the early days of children's public libraries staff brought in professionals specializing in storytelling and reading aloud artfully in public to train staff or actually deliver story time activities. This continues to happen, particularly in Wales with its healthy, active storytelling scene made up of numerous professional tellers, digital artists, writers, and performers.

Public private partnerships, or outsourcing, have provided a popular way for the traditional role of local government agencies and service providers to work

together in delivering many aspects of modern life. While some policy-makers argue on behalf of the growing use of the private sector, practices ‘...need to be refocused

around building on the distinctive qualities of service provision in the public sector, rather than expanding the private sector world of markets and contracts’ (Muddiman).

With regard to story time activities, Welsh institutions

A number of professional tellers and writers interviewed indicated that recently they are contacted more frequently by agencies and organisations tendering to deliver services to local authorities. These want to hire the artists for their storytelling—or just to ‘pump them’ for their expertise, or use their names for their reputation, particularly if they are Welsh speakers. But it’s clear a number of these businesses getting contracts, or bidding for them, don’t have the knowledge, skills, or talent. There is worry about competence; there’s potential for too many middlemen which would increase costs and deliver a worse service. Yet the tendering process doesn’t work well for individual self-employed artists. The increased use of a tendering process, and the way it’s implemented, can be a problem in many ways for free-lance tellers.

Summarized comments, Patrick Ryan

have over the years followed this recommended perspective, mostly by managing bookings with those not on the payroll through judicious selection based on local knowledge and reliable recommendations. In other words, through building on what is successful and already happening and by means of local partnerships, as already outlined in the previous two sections.

There have been instances in other fields and different parts of the United Kingdom where outsourcing has not shown value for money. This report suggests that much ‘outsourcing’ for story time activities is best conducted on this local, small-scale basis, with a few unconsidered kinds of outsourcing.

The advantages in using local storytellers and other narrative artists, or local agencies such as Beyond the Border, George Ewart Evans Centre, Literature Wales, StoryWorks and others who bring

in tellers and similar experts, is that this means relying on established good practices and partnerships which are capable of providing reliable information, consistent performance, and reasonable costs. Another aspect of ‘outsourcing’ within established

Volunteers? Absolutely, anybody, people are great. Whether you’re talking about libraries, archives, galleries, or museums. Some say you’re doing professional storytellers out of money. But with the best will in the world, you’re not going to be able to afford to bring these people in all the time. So train up volunteers and get them doing it. Obviously get clearances and checks and provide support through supervision and training. Professional tellers can and should be involved in the training, that’s fine, essential even. But I would go for parents, grandparents. Mother tongue storytelling is important too and to be encouraged. When you can have situations where you have stories by a Polish mother, an English mother, a Pakistani mother, a Welsh mother, that’s wonderful and can add so much to the wonderful story times you can do these days.

Liz Weir, Storyteller and Librarian

networks is increased use of free-lance professional artists, and increased use of volunteers. Again, examples are provided in Appendix II.

Professional storytellers regularly update and expand repertoires of stories and activities, relying on library, archive and museum collections as sources and for

inspiration. Such research is conducted at the artists' expense as there are rarely fees or development funds available for research,

One LEA imported an American scheme, 'SPELLBINDERS'. I was hired to train retired people to tell and read aloud stories to children. Funding ran out so training doesn't happen now, but volunteers continue to do this, going to schools to tell and read. It could still be brought back and expanded.

Cath Little, Storyteller and Singer

rehearsal and development. Museums and archives might engage storytellers for research, paying them to train museum, archive and local library staff to use stories found, and also making sure that local professional tellers have material ready for engagements celebrating special events.

StoryWorks, Capture Wales, and other digital storytelling projects have developed many local digital storytellers who could be recruited by libraries, museums and archives interested in involving the public in more digital storytelling. With initial support and training from digital storytelling agencies, these volunteers or part-time paid workers could provide informal, personal training similar to the 'computer buddies' programmes many library authorities run with volunteers, to help senior citizens and others new to computer services.

The potential for partnerships is limitless, whether between other local government agencies, education authorities, local individual volunteers and volunteer groups, and free-lance artists and experts, or large nonprofit or commercial organisations. Although any development of new programming or additional training will incur costs, these need not be major, particularly if relevant bodies work locally and closely in partnership, and start by building on what practices are already there and working well.

4.0. Concluding Remarks

The Library Association Record of 1969 quoted the Welsh Proverb: '*Rhaid cropian cyn cerdded*' or, 'You must crawl before walking.' This suggestion, to learn the basics of any subject first, is common sense. Museums, Archives and Libraries in Wales are well beyond the crawling stage when it comes to story times. The findings of this study suggest that for a long time they have been meandering pleasantly with well-established story time activities. Perhaps now is the time to inject some energy

and inspiration, and encourage invigorating strides with greater purpose, based on the knowledge, experience, talents and resources available throughout Wales.

APPENDIX I Part (A) Sample of Survey Questions

1. What type of organisation do you work in?

Museum

Archive

Library

2. What best describes the area your museum, archive, or library serves?

Urban (large metropolitan area)

Urban (suburb or market town)

Significant ethnic mix

Mostly English Speaking

Mostly Welsh Speaking

Equally mixed Welsh and English Speaking area

3. How often does your organisation have story time activities?

Frequently (e.g., daily or at least weekly for most of the year)

Regularly (e.g., during certain times of the year, such as half term and summer holidays)

Infrequently (e.g., only on special occasions, such as World Book Day or St. David's Day)

Never

Please feel free to provide information describing the types of activities here

4. What sort of activities happen in your story times?

(Options: Never, Sometimes, Regularly, Mostly)

Oral Stories (told from Memory)

Nursery rhymes, finger games, singing/action games

Summer Reading Games

Literary Stories (told or read aloud)

Histories, legends, oral history, biography (told or read aloud)

Table quizzes, trivia quizzes

Picture books (read aloud)

Digital Stories, Videos/Films, Computer Games (with narratives)

Arts and Crafts activities (related to a book or oral narrative)

5. What language do you usually speak in for story times?

Both English and Welsh

English

Other (please specify)

**6. Who provides the story time activities?
(Options: Never, Sometimes, Regularly, Mostly)**

Librarian

Library Assistant

Children's Librarian

Schools' Librarian

Museum Curator

Museum Education Officer

Literacy Support Officer

Museum Guide

Museum Attendant

Archivist

Archive Education Officer

Archive Assistant

Volunteer

Free-lance Professional Storyteller

Free-lance Professional Writer/Poet

Free-lance Professional Puppet/Drama Company

Free-lance Professional Visual Artist, Musian, Clown, or Magician

7. What age groups do your story time activities serve?

(Options: Never, Sometimes, Regularly, Mostly)

Under Fives

5-7 year olds

8-11 year olds

11-15 year olds

16-18- year olds

Adults (18+)

Senior Citizens (60+)

8. What's the usual average number of participants for a story time activity?

Around ten or under

Around ten to twenty

Around twenty to thirty

Around thirty to fifty

Over fifty

9. Why do you provide story time activities?

(Options to tick: Not at all important. Somewhat important. Very Important. Essential.)

To promote our services.

To promote our collections/exhibitions

To increase our visitor/user numbers

To develop and/or support literacy

To promote reading for pleasure

To support language learning

As a social service

To enhance appreciation for and understanding of exhibits/collections

To support cross-community/multicultural initiatives

Because we enjoy doing story time activities

10. Please feel free to add here any comments or observations regarding story time practices not covered by the previous questions.

APPENDIX I Part (B) Breakdown of Responses

1. What type of organisation do you work in?

Museum	17.8%
Archive	6.8%
Library	75.4%

2. What best describes the area your museum, archive, or library serves?

Rural (large metropolitan area)	34.2%
Urban (suburb or market town)	12.8%
Significant ethnic mix	55.6%
Mostly English speaking	66.8%
Mostly Welsh speaking	5.1%
Equally mixed Welsh and English speaking area	17.9%

3. How often does your organisation have story time activities?

Frequently (e.g., daily or at least weekly for most of the year)	51.3%
Regularly (e.g., during certain times of the year such as half term and summer holidays)	23.9%
Infrequently (e.g., only on special occasions such as World Book Day or St. David's Day)	15.4%
Never	9.4%

4. What sort of activities happen in your story times? (Please tick one option in each row) (Options: Never, Sometimes, Regularly, Mostly)

	Never	Sometimes	Regularly	Mostly
Oral Stories	38.2%	53.9%	4.5%	3.4%
Nursery rhymes, finger games, singing/action games	8.3%	16.7%	50%	25%
Book clubs or reading groups	39%	20.7%	34.1%	6.1%
Summer Reading Games	19.8%	18.5%	53.1%	8.6%
Literary Stories	25%	29.8%	29.8%	15.5%
Histories, legends, oral history, biography	41.2%	51.8%	5.9%	1.2%
Table quizzes, trivia quizzes	44.6%	47.3%	6.8%	1.4%
Picture books	10.8%	9.7%	37.6%	41.9%
Digital Stories, Videos/Films, Computer Games	76.9%	14.1%	6.4%	2.6%
Arts and Crafts activities	9.6%	35.1%	33%	22.3%

5. What language do you usually speak in for story times?

Welsh	0.9%
Both Welsh and English	34.9%
English	64.2%
Other	0

6. Who provides the story time activities? (Please tick one option in each row that applies) (Options: Never, Sometimes, Regularly, Mostly)

	Never	Sometimes	Regularly	Mostly
Librarian	18.8%	41.3%	25%	15%
Library Assistant	15.1%	10.5%	36%	38.4%
Children's Librarian	44.1%	18.6%	16.9%	20.3%
Schools' Librarian	68.8%	6.3%	12.5%	12.5%
Museum Curator	82.6%	17.4%	0	0
Museum Education Officer	72.3%	19.1%	8.5%	0
Literacy Support Officer	82.2%	13.3%	4.4%	0
Museum Guide	95.2%	2.4%	0	0
Museum Attendant	84.8%	10.9%	4.3%	0
Archivist	95.1%	4.9%	0	0
Archive Education Officer	100%	0	0	0
Archive Assistant	92.7%	7.3%	0	0
Volunteer	58.5%	24.5%	11.3%	5.7%
Free-lance Professional Storyteller	19.7%	72.7%	4.5%	3.0%
Free-lance Professional Writer/Poet	24.2%	74.2%	0	1.6%
Free-lance Professional Puppet/Drama Company	46.4%	53.6%	0	0
Free-lance Professional Visual Artist, Musian, Clown, or Magician	43.1%	54.9%	2%	0

7. What age groups do your story time activities serve?

	Never	Sometimes	Regularly	Mostly
Under Fives	6.3%	9.4%	37.5%	46.9%
5-7 year olds	6.1%	31.3%	44.4%	18.2%
8-11 year olds	6.3%	45.8%	37.5%	10.4%
11-15 year olds	47.1%	44.1%	8.6%	0
16-18 year olds	77%	19.7%	3.3	0
Adults (+18)	56.3%	28.1%	12.5%	3.1%
Senior Citizens (60+)	54%	30.2%	14.3%	1.6%
All ages (family groups, intergenerational groups)	32.3%	46.8%	17.7%	32%

8. What's the usual average number of participants for a story time activity?

Around ten or under	24.3%
Around ten to twenty	48.5%
Around twenty to thirty	24.3%
Around thirty to fifty	1.9%
Over fifty	1%

9. Why do you provide story time activities?

	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Very Important	Essential
To promote our services.	2.9%	12.5%	35.6%	49%
To promote our collections/exhibitions	7.7%	27%	40.7%	24.2%
To increase our visitor/user numbers	1.0%	13.7%	47.1%	38.2%
To develop and/or support literacy	7.8%	8.7%	28.2%	55.3%
To promote reading for pleasure	8.2%	13.4%	36.2%	42.3%
To support language learning	8.2%	13.4%	36.1%	42.3%
As a social service	15.7%	27%	41.6%	15.7%
To enhance appreciation for and understanding of exhibits/collections	16.7%	42.9%	32.1%	8.3%
To support cross-community/multicultural initiatives	17.9%	35.7%	38.1%	8.3%
Because we enjoy doing story time activities	6.3%	26%	41.7%	26%

10. Please feel free to add here any comments or observations regarding story time practices not covered by the previous questions.

Comments and observations integrated in the marginal notes of main report and in Appendix II

APPENDIX II (A) Suggestions and Recommendations

These are comments, suggestions, observations and criticisms gathered from interviews with various storytellers, writers, and museum and library staff.

Building Audiences

Initially you need to put on events and invite specific groups. Invite them to build up an interest. They don't know what you're doing. They won't just turn up on spec. So sometimes you have to guarantee an audience, rather than plan an event and hope some one turns up. You need to invite some one specifically, by showing them how important it is.

Work with the local media. Social networking is one way. But your local free newspaper is still useful, the free newssheets. But then, gone are the days when the local branch could contact their local papers and have notice of events put in. Now procedures are almost always that these sorts of announcements have to go through a central office, a person especially in charge of public relations and press releases. Now, this can work against them because however good that person is, lack of time, lack of specific local knowledge, can mean lots of potential audiences can be missed. Local contacts are very important.

Radio stations have to fill hours and hours with chat. If someone from the library, or museum, or archive or whatever can talk, offer to go on for free. Radio stations want good content. But usually to do that one now has to go through central PR office in the local authority. So the people in that department should be made aware of the possibility of local library staff or whomever having a talent or ability to do that. The branch staff can't just go to the radio themselves.

Training

I do, did, lots of work for Newport Libraries, world book day, summer scheme....for invited school groups, for family groups. They wanted training for staff to tell stories, based on experience of workshops on community storytelling I did for the public that came in.

There's lots of potential for future development: train staff, storytellers to do walking tours of museums, Cadw sites....guided tours, stories focused on/inspired by specific objects

If a storyteller could work with a small group of people—library or archive or museum staff, or teachers or classroom assistants—and they're keen to do that sort of story and have that story modelled for them. Maybe they can be refreshed, supported by meeting 2 or 3 time a year, or having access to video performances of each other or other tellers recorded there. Also, there needs to be recognition that libraries and museums may need to work more with educational remit. The problem with teachers not bringing classes to libraries or inviting libraries in schools comes

because they say there isn't time to do curriculum, but also teachers don't know what libraries offer in support and sometimes it's not communicated clearly to them because of different terminology.

I discovered you do need a top down, strategic imperative to do things, get things done. Because people will find reasons not to do it. 'I'm too busy, or I've all these other important things to do.' People need to be energized, motivated. People who want training in storytelling should be encouraged.

In St Fagans there's a tendency, among the older guys, to chat with folk in a way that turns into a narrative. That could be the space—that sort of semi social space that storytelling happens, but that requires a lot of skill. And confidence, absolutely. And knowledge: of the exhibit, and tidbits of narrative information about the painter, the place, all that kind of thing. I did do a number of workshops in museums but they were for teachers using museum's site or exhibition. Museum staff who have that knack, that interest, in communication should be really encouraged, supported. Trained if they want it.

Develop programmes around themes. There's 'dogs'—stories like 'The Diggin'-est Dog' and 'Hairy McLairy' and so on. There are so many packages based on themes, and they can be prepared and made ready. Other members of staff can be made aware of them. There could be kits that are easy for any one to pick up—so Mary who loves to do stories will have plenty but Josephine who doesn't like story times can still fill in at the last minute if Mary is sick. They can lift the books off the shelf.

I started with hardly any money and managed to do a lot, then we had a lot of money and did more, and now the money's gone again. I can go back to what we worked with before and look at the most effective use of money. Pool staff, have a team of people who can go out to support staff at branches where there isn't a person who feels able or has time to run story times, or they aren't trained or comfortable. You can't force people to do it, but they have to see they all have a role, be it manning the counter so some one else can run the activity or other people are telling stories or helping. The big thing libraries have to watch, in some libraries especially where you have an over enthusiastic person or extremely talented person is they put too much into the craft activities and forget what the library is really about. The core activities, pushing story based activity. Artwork is a follow up.

A problem about training, in any group of about 15, you get either one or two who are real storytellers. I think you can use volunteers to a certain extent but you do need to use your professionals. I don't mean you have to have professional storytellers but you have to have people really committed to storytelling among staff and with volunteers. People who have consciously developed a practice of storytelling. Let's term it like that. I know one or two teachers in Carmarthenshire who have retired and have taken up storytelling and are thought of as very good. People like that. If they could talk to museum staff about what are we wanting? Because otherwise children just don't look. Adults don't look. Storytelling can get them to look. They have to work with people who have that inventive curiosity

about how they get people looking and listening. It's got to be active, it can't be rote, it's got to be active, experimental and moving on.

Efficacy of Events

What librarians need to do if they're organising or funding or partly funding events. One thing is they need to be very clear and very specific about what they're getting out of this and what they're putting in. I think it's not enough just to have it in the library. They need to make links with the storyteller to think about what kind of stories they're having this time and how this will link with their work or with the place or with the interests of the children from their schools. What is happening here? It's not enough to just say the library welcomes you to the library and it's put on this thing. It should be preparation, just to be clear what the school group or other audience is getting, so perhaps teachers would talk to children about the library, why they're going, who they're seeing, what they're doing. So everyone feels good about the day.

The role of storytelling of asserting local knowledge is important. The role of storytelling is important in local knowledge, I think that libraries and museums have a huge role, the biggest role to play. They can link to the schools, they can link to the community, link with schemes. They can be a fulcrum of that.

Another reason for the success of Lambeth Storytellers. People who went around developed relationships with people. It wasn't just coming in telling a story, it was building relationships. Wales is extremely good at that. Thinking of the Welsh aspect, recognising the importance of place and the importance of social networks and drawing on those things. Those two things go together.

The personal relationships are important. There's a recognition of the importance of people in smaller places. I think good librarians in Wales, and there are lots, are great with regards to networking. If they're good they're very good at networking and bringing in other organisations. Whether they'll be inspired to do this in demoralizing times.....

Residencies and Partnerships: Storytellers and Libraries, Museums and Archives.

Projects—long term ones. They're great, but it's by the time one finishes, that's when one finally figures out what to do. Then so much time passes before doing another long-term residency that one spends time relearning and rethinking. It would be good to have support for development and research. One good thing about the residencies though, it's good chance to expand repertoire, to explore archives and get new ideas for stories and activities.

We really do need funding for research, for developing material. Another point: Literature Wales, requires artists in residence to focus on/produce writing in school visits....Users need to make wants and demands better known to Literature Wales. There's an argument to be made on the value of oral activities, one based on

research showing the importance of enriched oral language in developing brain, confidence, awareness, identity, critical literacy before writing. The telling process and writing process—initial stages are same, both use the same parts of the brain. Are visits about process or product? Writing outcomes—is it about creativity or about technical skills (emphasis on handwriting, spelling, grammar, syntax, semantics, etc.)?

Specific research made my storytelling in museums work. Museums and libraries of Wales have to pay people to do some good research. It doesn't have to be weeks of work, it can be days. But it's got to happen. In other words it's got to be taken seriously. You can book someone just for a day. But you're not going to get the best out of that. So please think about that, book someone for longer. It's about development. Ten different days over a year and let them be paid for a bit of research to support that. So that they have time to look over the place, see what's there, see what's interesting, see what the history is. We all know this but it's got to be said.

Libraries are very good. They are good because the librarian is always present. You never are working without a person. Normally the person who booked you is present. So they take time out from whatever library duties they have is going on. So my experience is that libraries are way ahead of schools in terms of putting audience, locality, and storyteller together in the way that has maximum impact.

There are other projects I've done and they just haven't worked. It's when you have a multi-agency approach and they just a disaster ...no one really takes the lead. What's absolutely fundamental about the use of storytelling to do anything, and that is to have faith in the people listening to it, and the act and process of storytelling, and the stories. The times I've seen it *not* work and been at the sharp end of it not working is, for example, working with kids, boys, considered to be under achieving, or resistant. Project organisers get in their head that there is no way these kids will be interested in stories. Forget it. So what they try and do then is dress it up in some way as something else. But they WILL listen to stories, and tell stories. I did a project where they tried to do it with sport and write sports journalism, it didn't really work. Massively expensive, massively complicated, didn't really work. Another time they decided to do Manga Comics. Because boys don't like stories, boys like Manga. So I went in the day after an artist had been there and I just had a whole load of pictures of severed limbs, and chopped off heads and blood splurting everywhere. And these kids were difficult. I just sat them down and told them some stories. Now for duration of the time I was telling them stories they were completely entranced, they just needed loads and loads and loads of that. I just kind of think that there's a critical moment when you're embarking on a project when you just have to hold tight and have faith in the art form and have faith in the people who are listening to it, whoever they are. And not dress it up as something else. Because then you inevitably fall between 2 stools.

There are projects that have been very good. There has been a product but the product is not the point, the product becomes part of the affirmation of the process.

So you have virtual circle. Rather than a feeling, 'Thank god we got through the project and managed to produce this thing.' No, that's not the point. The point is that the book has been produced as a natural outcome, and there's a copy of the book in every library, and the boys go, 'Oh, that, right, ok!' They're published and they're in the library and people can take the book out. That's the point of the product.

I've done a lot of museum work. The best museum work I've done has always been linked specifically with an exhibition. Generally speaking, an exhibition. Because you've got this nice dialogue between the material that you're working on and this special event, and usually it's a special event.

Using Volunteers and Casual Staff

I have been involved with training volunteers. You have an agreement, they have to be vetted for child protection and so on, you have to say whom they're responsible to. There has to be something like our mentoring scheme, it's not difficult to manage. Hospitals as well, bear in mind hospitals, a place to recruit and train volunteers. Also parenting groups, parent advice centres. We can train anybody. But we really need more men to tell stories, tell stories to children. There have been so many programmes to train foster carers to tell stories, and programmes to teach prisoners to tell stories to their own children when they visit. There is load of experience to draw from.

The Kick into Reading project with Cardiff City was tremendously popular with everyone, especially the coaching staff at the football club. Many of those coaches, almost all of them, integrated the storytelling into their regular work. One of them has done storytelling along with coaching sport at a centre for refugees and asylum seekers. Maybe more sports coaches working for clubs around Wales—not just football, but rugby and cricket too—could be trained, do something like the Kick into Reading project. But integrated with local authority institutions like libraries and museums, so the coaches could also be called upon to go into those places and tell stories.

CURRENT PRACTICES IN AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MUSEUMS

Ceri Black, of the Learning Department of Amgueddfa Cymru -National Museum Wales, provided a detailed report on story time practices in Welsh National Museums. This was fed into the Sections 2 and 3 of the report, but it is so specific and comprehensive that we include it here, so those seeking further discussion points in planning, or ideas for development, may make use of it.

Frequency of Story Time Activities:

The responses divided between 'Frequently', 'Regularly' and 'Infrequently' – partly because of uncertainty/confusion about definition of 'story time.' For example, Big Pit, indicated infrequently – but their miner guides would take visitors underground and would be delivering a narrative, on a daily basis.

Story Time Practices in National Museums in Wales:

- **Traditional oral storytelling** - all our museums would have traditional oral storytelling, particularly at significant/ relevant times of year.
- **Reciting from memory - literary stories or poetry** - we work with poets – including initiatives around rap.
- **Reading aloud - picture books, novels, and/or poems** – feature less often than in Libraries. National Museum Cardiff and sometimes Big Pit use specially commissioned pictures to help read / tell stories.
- **Rhyme times, and events for babies and parents** – are held regularly at a number of our museums, particularly National Waterfront Museum. This provision is developing at our museum - partly to increase early years provision, and partly in collaboration with organisations such as Twf and Menter, which are encouraging parents to bring up children bilingually.
- **Flannel board, craft or puppetry activities that usually arise from a told story or book that is read aloud** - As part of our family provision, there is often a craft activity connected to story-linked events such as Santes Dwynwen day or Christmas (Flannel board not used).
- **Book talks, authors' visits, and book clubs where narratives are shared and / or discussed** - Amgueddfa Cymru museums host author visits – and occasional lectures/talks based on books as part of the organisation's Events programme. The recent Anthony Browne exhibition at National Museum Cardiff is a strong example of author involvement and sharing / discussion of narrative - with children and adults.
- **Oral history and digital storytelling activities or projects** - oral history collection at St Fagans; oral history/digital stories used as part of display/exhibitions at a museums – e.g. St Fagans and National Wool Museum and National Slate Museum
- **Guided talks or tours that include anecdote and other types of narrative – these are frequently or regularly offered at Amgueddfa Cymru museums** –These would include, for example, underground tours at Big Pit led by miner guides, village tours at National Wool Museum Dre-fach and talks by exhibiting craftspeople/weavers; regular tours of galleries at National Museum Cardiff; guided tour by carpenter at National Slate Museum, as well as slate-splitting demonstrations.

- **Drama, historical re-enactments, or puppetry performances related to collections or exhibits** - frequently offered at Amgueddfa Cymru museums. This category would include e.g. the team of living history interpreters at St Fagans and historical re-enactments (e.g. St Fagans' schoolroom session experienced annually by about 18,000 children and teachers each year) as well as drama/historical enactments by visiting companies such as Viccus (Romans and Celts). Similarly the National Roman Legion Museum offer re-enactment as part of schools programme, as well as its provision for families/general visitors. Puppetry features only occasionally, e.g. St Fagans has collaborated with courses at the Royal Welsh College Music and Drama, whilst other museums have occasionally brought in puppetry as part of their events programme.

Model of Current Practices:

Use of Professional tellers:

National Slate Museum	Various freelance storytellers are employed as part of the annual events and activities programme. For example, during storytelling week, on bank holidays and as part of medium and large-scale events.
Big Pit	At Big Pit , storytellers such as Cath Little are used at specific and various times of year such as Miners' Fortnight event. In past years, a storyteller has been brought in to play 'Mother Christmas' during December, running school sessions and informal learning events for public. Last Christmas, however, the Learning Officer developed and delivered storytelling sessions for schools in the run-up to Christmas, using specially commissioned art work. For a recent Adult Learner's Week, Torfaen Council brought a storyteller to Big Pit as part of the ALW activities.
National Museum Cardiff	<p>Mair Tomos Ifans is employed each Christmas for storytelling sessions for various audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter Fair Event - for families • 10 'Christmas Traditions' workshops – for KS1 and 2 pupils • Sessions – for babies, pre-school children and their parents through TWf <p>Mair also incorporates music and singing into her storytelling, often bringing her harp with her.</p> <p>ALSO</p> <p>Professional storytellers are employed occasionally for public events. More commonly staff tell stories in galleries – usually linked to objects or works of art on display – also usually linked to some special event e.g. national storytelling week. One of the most popular sessions for Early Years, <i>Sounds of the Dinosaurs</i>, includes a tale, which is highly participative, which is told by a member of staff.</p>
National Waterfront Museum	National Waterfront Museum use storytellers such as Megan Lloyd, particularly during cultural events, particularly as a means to celebrate BME culture.

Digital Storytelling

Five out of seven national museums report that they have made digital stories or worked with specialists who make digital stories. All of our museums use digital film in some way, however - but not necessarily in the purest form of digital story. In past years, Amgueddfa Cymru's then ICT Trainer, Chris Bowler, was involved in training museum staff and also teachers in digital story skills. We believe that he continues to deliver training on a free-lance basis. Amgueddfa Cymru is beginning to use

digital stories as a means of reporting to trustees/staff – i.e. for advocacy. A number of our sites have been involved in making animations (with oral testimony/narrative).

National Slate Museum	Have created intergenerational digital stories in the past, using 2 specialists as facilitators for People's Collection Wales and also used digital stories as part of their 40 th birthday celebrations.
Big Pit	During Adult Learner's Week, the groups used flip cameras to make their own digital stories that will be worked on in ICT classes. A short film has recently been made about the work of the blacksmith.
National Museum Cardiff	Staff members have used digital stories to evaluate projects / collate information needed for evaluation. Cardiff Council Lifelong Learning brought in specialists instructors for Lifelong learning days. There is strong potential to develop digital story telling training at/from this site – giving people skills to create stories for the People's Collection and connecting with objects in our collections. We would welcome the opportunity to explore this with GEECS.
National Roman Legion Museum	Create digital films for use in temporary exhibitions that 'help to tell stories that would be too complex or boring to tell in a text format'.
National Wool Museum	Work with Culturenet Cymru, local schools and other partners on digital stories using the collection at the National Wool Museum and other local historical stories. Recent case study available.
St Fagans: National History Museum	Have used digital stories in the past usually as part of developing community curated displays for example as part of the 'Dresser' display in Oriel.
Outreach Work	<p>The On Common Ground outreach youth project, in particular, made extensive use of digital stories. The Community Co-ordinating Officer Sarah Greenhalgh based at National Museum Cardiff is on the board of Breaking Barriers.</p> <p>None of the museum sites appear to be involved in festivals at the present.</p>

Perceived Gaps in Provision, Areas for Additional Support, and Training Programmes

National Slate Museum	Would like to facilitate more digital stories in the future. The Learning Officer there has a background in Theatre in Education and an interest in this area.
Big Pit	Believe that storytelling sessions could target English students at secondary level especially if they are linked to the wealth of mining literature such as poems by Idris Davies or novels such as 'Rape of the Fair Country' and 'These Poor Hands'. 'A project could involve a storyteller twice; once at the start of the project to give a 'how to' tutorial, and once at the end to give feedback on stories that the students have written, having visited Big Pit and worked on mining literature at school.' This would have the benefit of improving literacy skills. ³
National Museum Cardiff	Staff report that they feel the cost of employing is often prohibitive – and Literature Wales will not pay for storytelling alone - only in combination with other initiatives. They are interested storytelling skills that can be taught to staff – maybe through training – to encourage more interpretation through storytelling. This site is increasingly targeting Early Years provision, and is working in collaboration with Bookstart and Flying Start as part of Amgueddfa Cymru's commitment to tackling Child Poverty.
National Roman Legion Museum	Museum would like to investigate the use of storytelling in educational sessions. Currently they only use a professional storyteller for Halloween event.
National Wool Museum	Would like 'information on what is available and different ways that we can use storytelling, 'also the costs involved as this is a factor'.
St Fagan's: National History Museum	Would be interesting to develop a festival for storytelling with elements of skill sharing and showcasing best practice. Most activities currently tend to focus on families, developing a festival for adults to share their experience could work well. ⁴
National Waterfront Museum	Staff run regular pre-school and early years sessions. The Learning staff have recently begun a very productive partnerships with Bookstart/Flying Start in Swansea and have been particularly successful in reaching parents and young children from deprived communities. The Learning Officer foresees that will be more involved in story telling activities in the future. The Waterfront Museum has already been approached by CyMAL to pilot the story telling training for early years for museum sector.

End Note

We appreciate that this study is using a broad definition of storytelling, to encompass a range of activities that can happen in story times, with a common element on **the oral delivery of narrative**.

³ (Given the Department for Education and Skills' emphasis on literacy, the connection between storytelling and literacy is something that is likely to feature more strongly in Amgueddfa Cymru's work in future.)

⁴ (This could perhaps work as a collaboration with the Beyond the Border festival. The above response may indicated that St Fagans staff are not aware of current Beyond the Border festival/outreach provision – or of initiatives in Cardiff, such as the Cardiff Storytelling Circle.)

We would, however, wish to put on record that there are other forms of storytelling for which museums are particularly significant e.g. storytelling through

- **Exhibits in galleries** (such as the *Origins Gallery* featuring Archaeology collections at National Museum Cardiff. The Origins gallery received **100,542** visitors in 2011/12, and has reached **489,91** since the gallery was opened to the end of June 2012
- **Touring exhibitions**, such as the *Anthony Browne* exhibition at National Museum Cardiff (about stories, but also telling the story of how Anthony Brown's work as an illustrator has developed over time.)
- Temporary exhibitions such as the *Refugee House* display at St Fagans, which has created an interior scene in consultation with refugees, and with borrowed objects/furnishing – including a large pile of junk mail. (This is apparently a common sight, because of concern that in throwing away mail, important official communication about status/residency etc. may be lost.)

Our museums and exhibitions tell stories in a variety of ways, through the selection, arrangement and juxtaposition of objects/artworks, with accompanying text labels, and with the support of AV – from 'sound-posts', loops of recorded information/films to ambient sound, such as the voices and background noises in the caban (the place that slateworkers relaxed, debated and ate their food) at the National Slate Museum.

APPENDIX II (B) Sources and Resources

MODELS OF GOOD PRACTICE:

1. “12 Boys Tell” project run by Paul Doyle, Reading Development Officer, Neath Port Talbot Libraries

This scheme was funded through the Read a Million Words together in Wales Project. The aims of *12 Boys tell* were to work with year 7 boys on creative reading and writing projects with experienced writers and storytellers and to feature different forms of literature—poetry with Phil Bowen, storytelling with Michael Harvey, monologues with Phil Carradice and short stories with Alan Durant. Outcomes included story performances by the boys to local primary school children, the publication of a book of their writing, production of a CD of the performance. The project has been adapted and repeated in different ways.

2. SPELLBINDERS <http://www.spellbinders.org/>

This was a local education authority initiative, but could be adapted by libraries or worked in partnership with libraries, archives, museums, and schools. It was bought in and adapted from an American programme (refer to the website). Storyteller and singer Cath Little trained senior citizens to tell and read aloud stories to children. Although funding has run out, the volunteers continue to do the programme on their own.

3. SUMMER STORYTELLING SCHEMES (based on practices in Lambeth Libraries in the 1970s and Belfast Libraries in the 1970s and 1980s)

Janet Hill, in her book *Children Are People, the Librarian in the Community* pioneered a storytelling scheme that saw groups of adults go around to various venues over the school holidays to tell and read aloud stories. Some were members of library staff, many were recruited from the community, such as retired people, people working part time or on a free-lance basis, mature students, and so on. These were trained to deliver the story times. In the summer holidays they visited parks, recreation centres, sports and leisure centres, arts centres, housing estates, anywhere they could gather an audience. Through planning, and some trial and error, a highly successful itinerary and timetable were established. Practical aspects of developing such a programme are described in the book. Welsh storyteller Mary Medicott was one of the original members of the storytelling teams involved, and trained many subsequent storytellers and staff. As Mary pointed out in an interview for this study, the Lambeth scheme was so popular it was taken over completely by all library systems in the entire area around Christchurch, New Zealand, where it ran successfully for several decades.

Liz Weir, as children’s librarian for Belfast, replicated the storytelling summer scheme so as to be sure that throughout the worst period of ‘The Troubles’, children from all sides of the community were still served by the public libraries. The scheme

was highly successful there, and laid the foundations for much of the excellent cross-community and peace-making work in arts and education in Northern Ireland, as well as proving to be something that revitalized the popularity of storytelling for adults in all of Ireland.

4. YOUTH LIBRARY GROUP (YLG) RESOURCES FOR STORY TIMES

Telling the Tale, a Storytelling Guide, by Liz Weir (ed.) YLG, 1988 was a booklet on storytelling and *Tell Me Another One, Storytelling Through Picture Books* by Liz Weir and Grace Hallworth (1988), was a video, both published and produced by YLG. Both still have valid and useful guidelines on developing story times in libraries particularly and in schools, museums, archives and galleries generally. It would be worthwhile tracing these resources, and looking into reproducing them, or recreating modern versions of both. Liz Weir and YLG/CILIP staff are willing to help with this, and the GEECS with its access to facilities in the School of Creative and Cultural Industries has the technical staff and equipment to reproduce the video as a DVD, or to produce a modern version of the film.

ORGANISATIONS, AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

These do or could support story time activities of all kinds, and would be potential partners with local authorities, or with practitioners in the library, museum and archive sectors

Beyond the Border Wales International Storytelling Festival

<http://www.beyondtheborder.com/>

George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling <http://glam.ac.uk/storytelling>

StoryWorks <http://www.storyworksglam.co.uk/>

Llenyddiaeth Cymru / Literature Wales <http://www.literaturewales.org/>

Forum for Storytelling in Wales

CILIP Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/>

Youth Library Group (YLG) <http://www.cilip.org.uk/get-involved/special-interest-groups/youth/pages/default.aspx>

School Library Association <http://www.sla.org.uk/>

Society for Storytelling <http://www.sfs.org.uk/>

National Literacy Trust <http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/>

Book Trust <http://www.booktrust.org.uk/>

Reading Agency <http://readingagency.org.uk/>

Scottish Storytelling Centre <http://www.scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk/>

Storytellers of Ireland <http://www.storytellersofireland.org/>

Poetry Ireland/Writers in Schools <http://www.poetryireland.ie/education/writers-in-schools.html>

Apples and Snakes <http://www.applesandsnakes.org/>

Just Imagine Story Centre <http://www.justimaginestorycentre.co.uk/>

The Story Museum <http://www.storymuseum.org.uk/>

Seven Stories <http://www.sevenstories.org.uk/>

Ministry of Stories <http://www.ministryofstories.org/>

National Storytelling Network <http://www.storynet.org/>

Hay Festival of Literature and Arts <http://www.hayfestival.com>

Photobus <http://www.photobus.co.uk>

Aberth Digital Storytelling <http://www.aberth.com>

NEMO—Network of European Museum Organisations <http://www.ne-mo.org/>

GEM Group for Education in Museums <http://www.gem.org.uk/>

NMDC National Museums Directors' Council <http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk>

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