

wonderland education site

"Great to think about how to explain science through beauty"

"My head is buzzing, so many things going on, very excited"

Report on a visit to Wonderland by Charlotte Da Costa Greeves, Ellen Harrington & Lorna Belford from Formby High School

Today was an experience not to be forgotten; we were lucky enough to go to London, and meet Helen Storey - a popular Fashion Designer and Professor Tony Ryan to view their work to do with Recyclable plastics. The trip was a giant success, as it aimed to inspire our thoughts and change our actions towards recycling.

We had a two-hour session discussing Helen and Tony's latest designs for the "Disappearing Dresses". We learnt that by working together and combining ideas they were able to achieve such amazing success.

They then asked us to come up with our own ideas and develop the project because they wanted to find a new interesting way to introduce it into schools.



What we got out of the day

For all three of us it has made us more aware of the rising issue of recycling and how important Tony and Helen's project could be. To develop a plastic that can dissolve in water is quite an amazing and interesting invention. We learnt that this was achieved by linking monomers to make polymers. What we thought that a good idea to inspire young children would be if the children were to bring in as much

litter as they could (with no limits) and we'd ask them what they would like to make out of it.

So they would be giving the litter (waste) a second life. We have developed this further, for example.

- Jewellery could be made from coke cans or bottles, in order to show people that we can re-use these products as they're not just waste, they're materials waiting for their next life
- It could even be a huge thinking area for children where they can understand the full concept of recycling. (Primary School)
- Dresses could be made by melting plastics together.
- Pictures of bins all adding up to make a large collage

- Household rubbish can be used as a competition to collect as much as possible then make whatever they desire.
- Make bins out of rubbish!
- Making videos of building things out of the rubbish we had collected. Also showing how all recyclable products are made; the lead up to the final product. (build up of final product)
- Dissolving the rubbish and creating something out of what's left (if anything.)
- As many people as possible bring in what they throw away in a day (a fun competition will interest young Primary School students)
- Visiting Rubbish Tips.
- Putting up Posters will attract people's attention.
- Models made of rubbish, possibility doing an exhibition showing how all was created.
- Slogans - rubbish ain't rubbish! Plastic possibilities! etc.
- Day in the life of . . . a packet of crisps showing video footage of how it was created, used, dumped, left!
- Real video footage of how recyclable products are made.. ...
- Plastic bag dresses which will fit in with the recyclable fashion show.
- Going to different places to find out more about the recycling issue.
- Letting older students (us) teach other primary school students.
- Bins on screen doing their daily job on film, this will eventually be speeded up to show the full effect.
- Animations of people littering. (Persil advert)
- Recycled wind farm. Windmills made from plastic, aluminium, tin and such other items.
- Modelling cans of coke, designing clothes, jewellery, shoes finally putting on a fashion show.



Another idea that was brought up was if teachers changed roles, so subjects instead of being separate all linked into one another. So in chemistry you could look at it in an artist's way. Then in an art lesson the chemistry side would be made clearer. This would be a good idea because every lesson could be made new and original; coming into a lesson with the thought of just writing in a text book can be quite repetitive all lesson, instead we would be participating in a practical exercise - today we discovered that it comes across much clearer to other students by looking at the practical side of the project.

Helen Storey and Tony Ryan have created a series of dresses that will dissolve in water over a 3 week period. The dresses are made from polymers and challenge us to think about how we dispose or deal with the numerous plastic products once we have finished with them.



The next steps – Peter Belford

The wonderland visit to the London College of fashion has brought together the Art and Science Departments in a collaborative project, which should benefit both. If we have realised anything today it is that no matter what subject we teach we can all learn from each other and the creative product of two departments working together is greater than the sum of them working in isolation. The students have come up with many ideas and these are listed above. The students now have ownership of the ideas and we aim to work with them to turn them into a viable project that has sustainability built into it. Our task as educators is to provide the vehicle for their ideas. We would like to invite Year 5 students from all over Sefton to Formby High on a Friday afternoon for 5/6 weeks during the summer term. We would ideally like 4 students plus 1 teacher per school. We could accommodate up to 6 schools. One member of staff from Art and Science along with the three girls will develop and lead the project. It is anticipated the year 5 students will create a final product by the end of the 5/6 week period. The teachers accompanying the students can then take the ideas and the students' products back to their own schools and continue to develop the project and hence build sustainability.

The next stage is to involve our own year 7 students in September. These students will be able to personalise their own project. We would then like to take a few of these students to Belfast on the 7th October to see the final Wonderland exhibition. By going to London today we were only one of 4 schools nationally to be at the launch of Wonderland and therefore we would like to be able to contribute to the project through our work in school and then be part of the final exhibition in Belfast.