

Portfolio of Activities promoting Welsh in an English Medium School

Contents Page

Rationale	Page 2
Overview of activities	Page 4
Evaluation	Page 7
Appendices	Page 9
References	Page 16

2.

This portfolio looks at why the use of the Welsh language in Wales has declined and how schools, along with guidance and policies from the Welsh Assembly, are attempting to revive the language and culture of Wales. In 1536, whilst Henry VIII was on the throne the Acts of Union was passed which made Wales a part of England “the Statute of Wales (1284) had annexed Wales to the crown of England, the new act declared the king’s wish to incorporate Wales within the realm”. (Beverley Smith, Carter and Gruffudd, 2020). Welsh is a Celtic language that dates back thousands of years “Welsh identity emerged from the Celtic Britons” (Dabrowska, 2017) and for much of that time conflict existed between England and Wales. In 747 AD Offa the King of Mercia built Offa’s Dyke as a boundary to keep Wales separate from England and in the 14th Century Owain Glyndwr, the last Prince of Wales lead many battles against the English. In 1847 the UK government published a report on the state of Welsh education. The report claimed that Welsh education was a danger to Welsh children and they should not use their own language. It further claimed that “the Welsh were ignorant, lazy and immoral, and that among the causes of this were the use of the Welsh language and nonconformity” and stated Welsh was a " peculiar language isolating the masses from the upper portion of society" (Lyngen, Symons and Vaughan Johnson, 1847).

The report of the Blue Books, as they were called, drew a dark picture of ignorance and, what was much worse, immorality ... The underlying assumption of the report was that 'ignorance' and Ignorance of the English language' were synonymous (Penhallurick, R. 1993).

Schoolchildren were shamed into not speaking Welsh using a wooden plaque known as a Welsh Not. If a child was caught speaking Welsh, they would have to wear the Welsh Not around their neck. The child wearing the Welsh Not at the end of the day would be punished. Parents accepted this treatment of their children having been convinced that not speaking English was negatively affecting their development and lives. This was the start of removing spoken Welsh from the classrooms and eventually from Welsh homes and all other areas of life in Wales and is known as The Teachery of The Blue Books. Over the last 200 years Wales has tried to devolve from England so that it is once again responsible for its own land and people. In 1998 the Welsh Assembly was created, and Wales now has a version of its own government with some law-making powers and the ability to create an education system it deems suitable for Welsh pupils

3.

The advent of the assembly in 1999 meant Wales could go its own way and create its own, distinctive education system, rather than being an extension of the system in England (Jones, 2016).

In 2014, Professor Graham Donaldson reviewed Welsh education provision and wrote The Successful Futures Report, which states “all children and young people should continue to learn the Welsh language to the age of 16” (Donaldson, 2015). One of the main aims of the Welsh Assembly is to put the Welsh language back at the heart of the classroom, homes, and every part of everyday life with their policy of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050. To protect the Welsh language and culture and to improve the numbers of Welsh speakers in Wales there are several strategies the Welsh Assembly has introduced.

4.

School A is an English medium secondary school in Swansea yet there is consistent pressure from the Welsh Assembly and Estyn to improve its provision of spoken Welsh and educational content of Wales, its culture and history across the whole school curriculum. Following inspections, the last two Estyn recommendations for School A state “Continue to develop learners’ bilingual competency and the Welsh dimension of the curriculum” (Estyn, 2011) and “Improve pupils’ standards in Welsh” (Estyn, 2017). It is clear from these recommendations that there is an expectation for more use of the Welsh language within English medium schools. Welsh medium schools are an area of investment for the Welsh Assembly and they plan to increase Welsh medium education to 40% by 2050 as this will help to develop bilingual Welsh/English young people to meet their 1 million Welsh speakers 2050 policy objective. If the Cymraeg 2050 policy is to succeed, then all school children need to be encouraged to become bilingual.

The Cwricwlwm Cymreig is a programme designed by the Welsh Assembly which “develops whole-school approaches so that the Curriculum Cymreig is an essential part of the school’s ethos” (Developing the Curriculum Cymreig - Hwb, 2003). School A uses it to improve the understanding of bilingualism and to help children develop Welsh language skills alongside English. It also provides education of the history and cultures of Wales to improve patriotism and create a feeling of Welshness and belonging to Wales. The new Curriculum Cymreig 2022 has given teachers the opportunity to blend learning experiences for pupils with the introduction of Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE). These AoLEs were recommended in the Successful Futures Report conducted by Professor Graham Donaldson, because it was considered that the old curriculum was too prescriptive, outdated and irrelevant and quality teaching was lost in over assessment. Successful Futures allowed the Welsh Education Department to

create the conditions for schools and practitioners to focus more directly on teaching and learning and to prepare children and young people in Wales to thrive and be successful in a rapidly changing world (Donaldson, 2015).

5.

Pupils now spend more time on assessment skills by conducting assessment tasks themselves in lessons where they either self-assess or peer assess schoolwork. This can be helpful as it helps to develop critical thinking skills but for pupils with ALN these tasks can be very difficult as they cannot make the decisions needed for this type of task. Mezirow's transformational learning theory states that critical reflection "is the distinguishing feature of adult learning" (Bates, 2019), and is an important life skill that must be developed. Assessment sheets are printed with instructions in Welsh and English to assist pupils with absorbing the Welsh translation (see Appendix 1).

To improve the use of incidental Welsh within the school community there are several strategies School A use. They use a kangaroo called Can Do Kanga (see Appendix 1) on almost all their stationary and this kangaroo ties the six AoLE elements of the new curriculum into marking schemes, self-assessment book stickers, newsletters and posters. The posters displayed in every classroom show common phrases in English and Welsh (see appendix 2) and pupils are expected to ask the teacher in Welsh, if the pupil asks in English, they are told to look at the poster and ask in Welsh. This method of teaching fits Bandura's social learning theory that "children's learning is influenced by observation, with children modelling people around them" (Aubrey and Riley, 2019). Children who learn Welsh at home are more fluent than those taught Welsh at school, but it is hard for children who go to Welsh medium schools to practice speaking Welsh at home when their parents cannot speak the language. It is also hard for pupils who are learning Welsh at school to practice at home when the parents do not speak Welsh.

Pupils and staff moving around the campus are expected to greet each other in Welsh and say please and thank you in Welsh too. Pupils are expected to write the full day and month in Welsh in their schoolbooks at the start of each lesson. The calendar pages of the school pupil planner are printed bilingually (see Appendix 3). School A holds a formal assembly every week for each year group and the hymns that are sung in these assemblies are Welsh hymns (see Appendix 4).

It is easier to teach young children Welsh as you can make it much more fun, interactive and entertaining by using songs with actions, dances and creative activities – activities which most older pupils would not engage in. School A dedicates specific days throughout the school year to allow more social, fun activities to engage older pupils. It holds an Eisteddfod on St Davids

6.

Day for Key Stage 3 (KS3) pupils and there are competitions, musical performances and recitations to make it as engaging as possible. To be as authentic as possible they enact the crowning of the Bard ceremony, usually the overall winner of the competitions. (see Appendix 5). School A also holds an Urdd Day and has an Urdd swimming team (see Appendix 6). Shwmae Day is another fun day promoting Welsh language and activities that the school holds each year (see Appendix 7).

School A runs several different trips throughout the year to places that are rich in Welsh history and culture. They visit St Fagans, the National Museum of History (see Appendix 8). Mining is a huge part of Welsh history, so the pupils also visit Big Pit, the National Coal Museum (see Appendix 9). Rugby has been an important part of Welsh culture since the Victorian era “the leaders of the new industrial Wales saw the popularity of rugby as a symbol of the unity of a society and its people” (Johnes, 2008). School A runs a trip, for all pupils and staff, to Cardiff Principality Stadium to watch Wales play one of their Autumn Series rugby games (see Appendix 10). Every year School A runs a trip to Disneyland Paris which hosts a Welsh Festival to promote the Welsh language. Mickey and Minnie wear their traditional Welsh costumes, Welshcakes and Daffodils are handed out and schools can perform Welsh songs on the stage (see Appendix 11). It is a great way to promote the Welsh language and culture on an international stage.

In Geography lessons the KS3 pupils complete a worksheet on Wales (see Appendix 12). This worksheet helps them to understand the main towns and cities of Wales. Also, they learn about the geographical features such as the rivers, mountains and National Parks of Wales. In an AoLE lesson for the expressive arts department pupils learn about the Aberfan Disaster, Wales in the 60s, famous musical artists of different genres and the story of Gelert. They finally compose a piece of music or write a short script to perform relating to the Welsh history and culture they have discovered (see Appendix 13).

7.

For an English medium school, School A displays a significant amount of Welsh language content throughout the classrooms and wider school environment. This provides opportunities for pupils to see, read and speak Welsh inside and outside of the classrooms. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig aims to put Welsh language and Welsh content into all areas of the school curriculum and not just as a standalone subject and School A are successful at this objective. However, teachers cannot force the pupils to engage with the language and many of the teachers are not Welsh speaking themselves so are often not confident with reading and speaking Welsh. Recruitment of Welsh speaking teachers into English medium schools is paramount to raise the level of Welsh spoken in these schools. It is only fluent Welsh speaking teachers that have the skills needed to raise bilingualism within the school environment. Before 1999, pupils had the option of whether to take Welsh as a GCSE examination or not. In 2014 the short course Welsh GCSE was scrapped making Welsh compulsory at GCSE level. Like other compulsory subjects such as RE and PE pupils behave negatively towards it because they did not choose to learn it. GCSE results do not necessarily mean the skill is being used. This has damaged the development of the Welsh language because young people now see Welsh as an invaluable, unwanted GCSE that they are being forced to take rather than welcoming the valuable skill of being a bilingual Welsh speaker. However, more needs to be done to make pupils aware that it is a valuable skill that will allow them to access better employment in Wales, as the Welsh Assembly Language policy states “we will over time also need to recruit more people who already have Welsh language skills” (Policy and Strategy, 2020). Adult non-Welsh speakers are being excluded from applying for key jobs due to their lack of Welsh language ability “language requirements in public-facing roles in the public sector are not a new thing in Wales, which has two official languages, Welsh and English” (Higgins, 2016). By excluding people who do not have the specified Welsh language skills this also excludes the people from the many different ethnic groups that live in Wales from applying for better jobs with key employers. This is discrimination even though the main goal is to bring back everyday use of the Welsh language in Wales. The linguist Chomsky believed that “we are all born with a predisposition to learn language” (Bates, 2019). Therefore, young children are more receptive to learning a second language as they have bilingualism skills which would make it easier for them to learn Welsh. Chomsky also believed the optimum age for children to learn a language is up to the age of ten therefore primary schools should focus on Welsh medium education so that when the children graduate to secondary school, they already have all the Welsh skills they

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need. The Welsh Assembly language policy goes on to state “everyone has the potential to be a Welsh speaker” (Policy and Strategy, 2020).

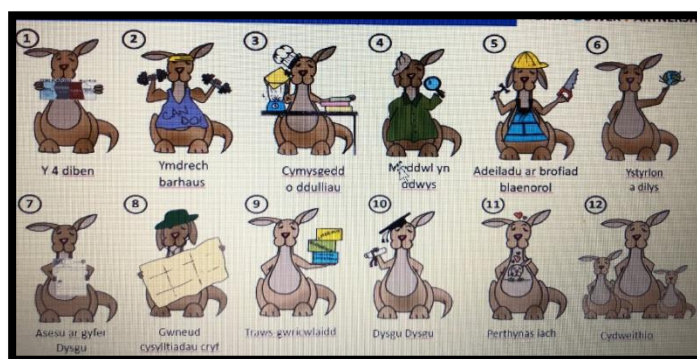
If people in Wales are to become bilingual Welsh speakers and use more Welsh in everyday life primary schools should focus on Welsh medium education so that when the children graduate to secondary school, they already have all the Welsh skills they need. Welsh is a beautiful language but if it is not used regularly then the language will be lost. The Welsh Assembly have strategies and policies which should protect and reactivate the use of the Welsh language, but they are not engaging today's society. English medium schools need to receive more investment and support for training staff to speak and understand Welsh so that they can confidently use the language, the Welsh Assembly Language policy states “people given both time and motivation to continuously improve their Welsh language skills” (Policy and Strategy, 2020). However, this is not happening due to lack of funding, time and resources. The Welsh Assembly need to find a way of engaging both adults and children in the pleasure of learning all they can about Wales, its rich history, culture and most of all the language.

9.

Appendices

Appendix 1

LITERACY MARKING POLICY	
POLISI MARCIO LLYTHRENNEDD	
Your teachers will mark your work using the following symbols:	
A	A word left out or where to add more writing. Rhywbeth ar goll
Sp S	A spelling mistake. Sillafu
//	A new paragraph needed. Paragraff newydd
?	This part is confusing. Gwallus
Ben	This letter should be a capital letter. Prit llythrennau
*	Two things that you have done well. Sêr
*	Something you need to do to improve. Dynuniad



Appendix 2

Dyddiau'r wythnos		Misoedd y flwyddyn	
Days of the week		Months of the year	
Dydd Llun	Monday	Ionawr	January
Dydd Mawrth	Tuesday	Chwefror	February
Dydd Mercher	Wednesday	Mawrth	March
Dydd Iau	Thursday	Ebrill	April
Dydd Gwener	Friday	Mai	May
Dydd Sadwrn	Saturday	Mehefin	June
Dydd Sul	Sunday	Gorffennaf	July
		Awst	August
		Medi	September
		Hydref	October
		Tachwedd	November
		Rhagfyr	December

Cymraeg bob dydd	
Everyday Welsh	
Ga i fynd i'r ... os gwelwch yn dda? Can I go to the ... please?	Ga i ... os gwelwch yn dda? Can I have ... please?
nyrs nurse	bapur paper
tŷ bach toilet	help help
Ga i fenthig ... os gwelwch yn dda? Can I borrow ... please?	Ymatebion Responses
pen pen	Oei Yes, you can
ruler ruler	Na chei No, you can't
glu glue	Wrth gwrs Of course
pen pen	Dim eto Not yet

Termau Marcio	
Marking Terms	
Yndrech dda Da iawn Gwaith da Perffaith! Ardderchog Bendigedig Ffantastig! Wedi gwella llawer Daliwch ati	A good effort Very good Good work Perfect! Excellent Wonderful Fantastic! Much improved Keep at it
Siomedig Dim digon o yndrech	Disappointing Not enough effort
Ble mae'r gwaith cartref? Where is the homework?	
Ble mae'r dyddiad? Where is the date?	
Ble mae'r teitl? Where is the title?	

10.

Appendix 3

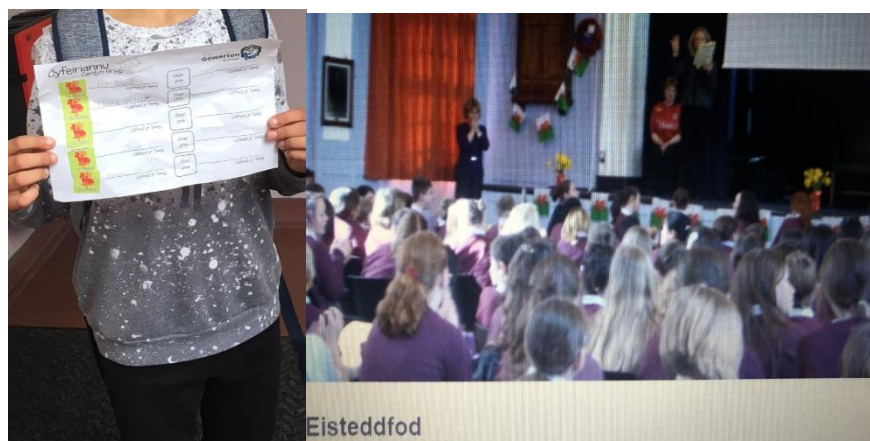
SUMMER TERM 2020		CALENDAR 2019 - 2020			TYMOR YR HAF 2020	
Week Commencing	Week	Dydd Llun MONDAY	Dydd Mawrth TUESDAY	Dydd Mercher WEDNESDAY	Dydd Iau THURSDAY	Dydd Gwener FRIDAY
Ebrill 20 April	2					
Ebrill 27 April	1					
Mai 4 May	2	May Day				
Mai 11 May	1					
Mai 18 May	2					
Mai 25 May		HALF TERM		HANNER TYMOR		
Mehefin 1 June	1					
Mehefin 8 June	2					
Mehefin 15 June	1					
Mehefin 22 June	2					
Mehefin 29 June	1					
Gorffennaf 6 July	2					
Gorffennaf 13 July	1					
Gorffennaf 20 July		Inset Day				

Appendix 4

Diolch, diolch, lesu
 Diolch, diolch, lesu
 Diolch, diolch, lesu yw fy nghân;
 Diolch, diolch, lesu,
 O! diolch, diolch, lesu,
 Diolch, diolch, lesu yw fy nghân.

Nefol Dad fe'th garwn
 lti bywyd rhoddwn
 O fe'th garwn
 lesu Grist fe'th garwn
 lti bywyd rhoddwn
 O fe'th garwn
 Ysbryd Glan fe'th garwn
 lti bywyd rhoddwn
 O fe'th garwn

Appendix 5



11.

Appendix 6



Appendix 7



Appendix 8



12.

Appendix 9



Appendix 10



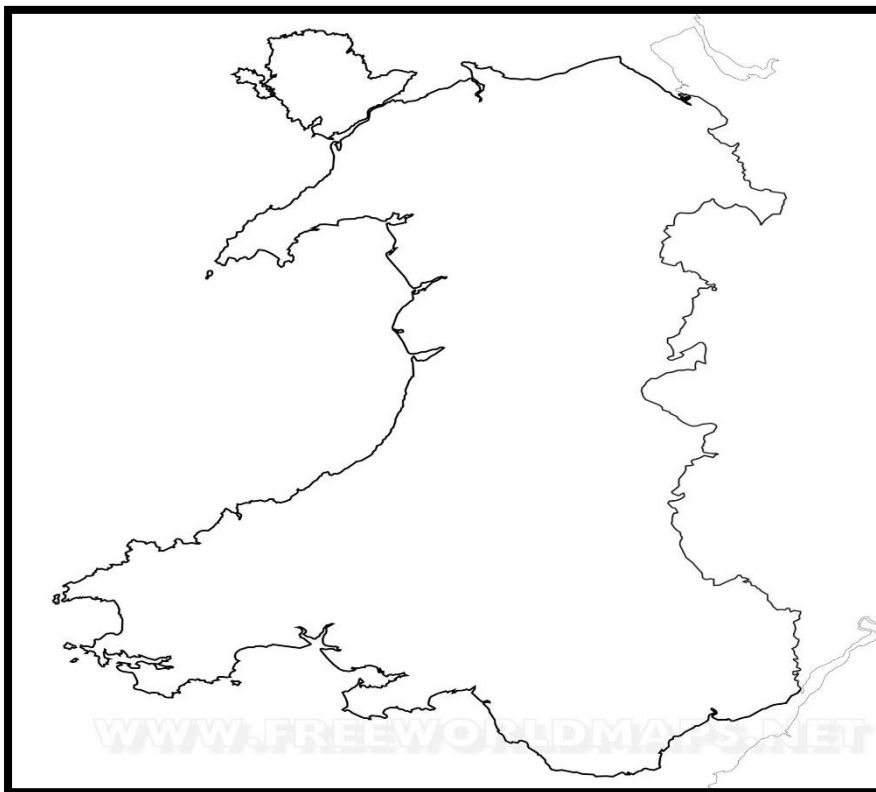
Appendix 11



13.



Appendix 12



Towns and cities – Rhyl, Llandudno, Bangor, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Newtown, Aberystwyth, Fishguard, St Davids, Pembroke, Carmarthen, Gower Peninsula, Swansea, Port Talbot, Cardiff, Newport, Abergavenny, Llandovery, Builth Wells, Welshpool, Wrexham.

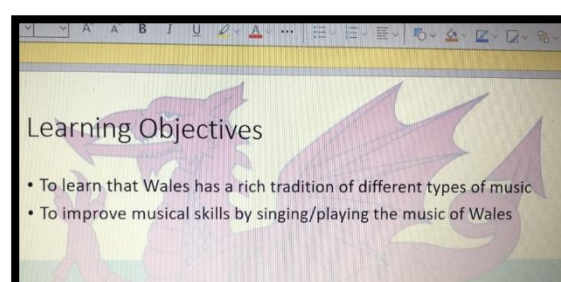
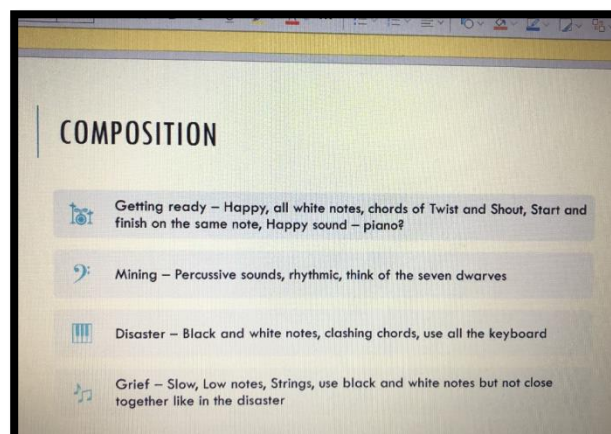
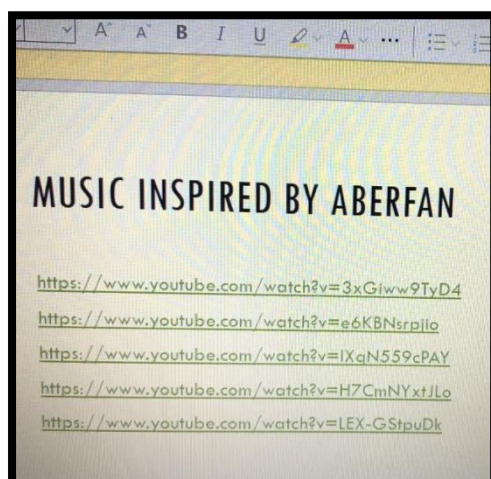
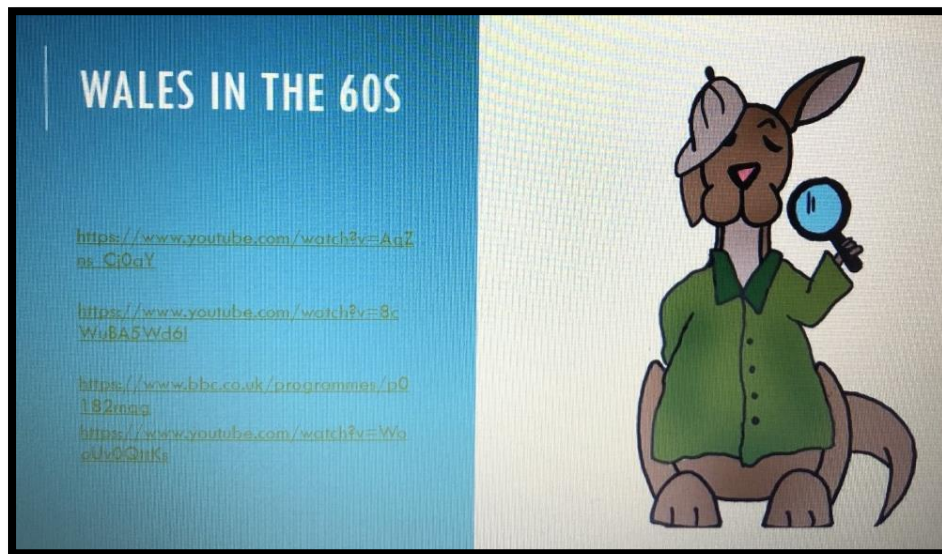
National Parks - Snowdonia, Brecon National Park, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

Mountains - Snowdonia, Pen y Fan.

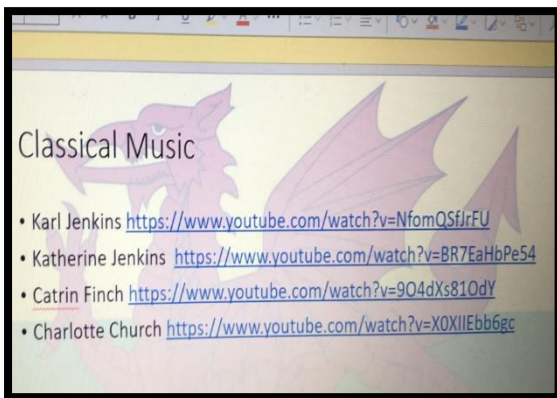
Rivers – Wye, Tywi, Teifi, Tawe, Severn, Usk, Taff, Dee, Elwy, Conwy.

14.

Appendix 13

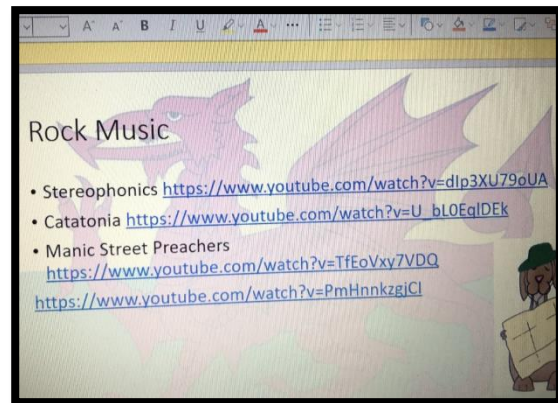


15.



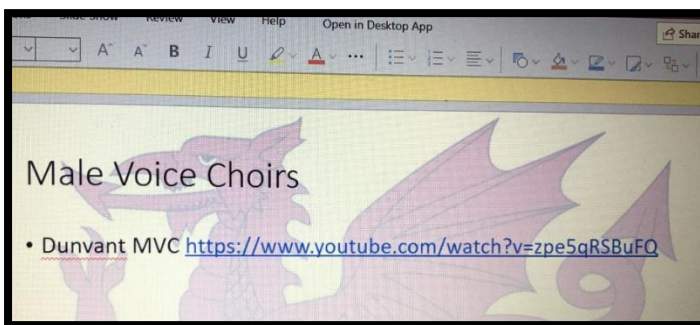
Classical Music

- Karl Jenkins <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfomQSfjrFU>
- Katherine Jenkins <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BR7EaHbPe54>
- Catrin Finch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Q4dXs81OdY>
- Charlotte Church <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOXIIEbb6gc>



Rock Music

- Stereophonics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIp3XU79oUA>
- Catatonia https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_bL0EqIDek
- Manic Street Preachers
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfFoVxy7VDQ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmHnnkzgjCI>



Male Voice Choirs

- Dunvant MVC <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpe5qRSBuFO>

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