

Hidden Presence – a [fotogallery](#) project

Learning resource – Offa's Mead Academy

The Participants

35 KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 mixed) for 3 days

The Project

Theme: Borders and Environments

This school is just over the River Wye in England. The majority of the staff live in Wales and the children in England. There is a nearby barracks at Beachley, meaning many of the young people are children of servicemen and women, and many of these have travelled about and attended different schools in the UK and abroad.

Aims

- To explore journeys memory, culture, borders (in-between different places) and belonging
- To learn creative skills in photography using iPads, computers and sound equipment
- To explore interactive ways of storytelling through the use of gifs and immersive web environments
- To produce written and audio accounts on the themes of identity, belonging and culture

Planning

Planning was undertaken with the class teacher. As the project required taking the participants offsite this had to be planned months in advance, to get a sign off from the parents and the school. Lesson plans and learning aims were circulated in advance.

Outcomes

- **How Did I Get Here?**
Introductory task. Children were asked to draw the route from home to school from memory. The maps didn't have to be geographically accurate but had to include points of interest – what they remembered seeing – along the way, and this had to be illustrated visually. This is a very useful [psychogeographical](#) exercise for remembering a route visually as every participant's map will be different to the next as we experience a journey differently.
- **Mapping**
Traced map of the area, including Piercefield, the border between Wales and England and location of Offa's Mead school, to contrast with the remembered journeys. The children also added events and

locations that were significant to them, ie. Cousin's houses, where they walk their dog, to be made into animated gifs. See [How to: Gif Animation](#).

- **Piercefield Walks & Spheres**

Site visit to Piercefield House to photograph their journey using digital photography. Photos were then edited with online software Microsoft Photosynth to create otherworldly animated walks through the woods.

See [How to: Photographic Walk with Photosynth](#)

During the visit to Piercefield the children took photos of the landscape and attraction spots in the Walks by the use of iPads. Back in the classroom they create 360 environments with the addition of drawings, collage, etc.

See [How to: 360° Panoramas with Sphere](#)

- **Nathaniel at Piercefield**

Children were introduced to the story of Nathaniel Wells and asked to draw what they imagine him to look like, in the environment of Piercefield House and grounds. They made additions to the drawings that they then animated using Photoshop on macs. See [How to: Gif Animation](#).

- **Nathaniel in St Kitts**

We played sounds of the natural environment of the Caribbean to the class, who were asked to close their eyes and to listen carefully, then to guess what these sounds were. They illustrated these sounds from Nathaniel's childhood, to be inserted into Spheres. The visuals were also printed off to large poster size and installed in Piercefield, held up by the young people and photographed in situ.

Impact on Learning

The young people were introduced to new ways of working with technology, improving their understanding of digital photography, and creative media. The students improved their oracy skills, developing and presenting information and ideas. Animation improved coordination and team skills.