

SITES OF MEANING

Marker Stones for the Millennium

EDUCATIONAL PACK – SECONDARY

General Information

Sites of Meaning was a millennium project of Middleton and Smerrill in the Derbyshire Peak. The project marked the seventeen entrances to its parish with inscribed boundary stones. Much of the activity had an educational focus and included two projects with Youlgrave Primary School - the *Sculpture Residency* and *Other Stones - Other Meanings* where the school worked with artists, writers, archaeologists and educationalists. A later project, *InscribeNOW*, involved secondary schools and local colleges in developing publicity material for *Sites of Meaning*. This pack is designed for teachers, lecturers or students who may be visiting the area and is based on our experience gained in those projects.

Visiting Middleton

Middleton is a small village but large parish. However, many of the *Sites of Meaning* marker stones, plus other sites of interest are easily visited from the centre of the village or Youlgrave. More distant stones and places of interest such as Arbor Low need transport.

Facilities are limited – Middleton has no shops or pubs – but a useful shed can be found at the end of the children's playground in the main square and there are public toilets. Parking is not normally a problem except at busy weekends. The Youlgrave Website provides lists of local services and places to stay.

Well Dressing week (Spring Bank Holiday) is an excellent time to visit Middleton when the village throngs with visitors and there is the well dressing to see. But if you come the week before you'll be able to see the well dressing boards being prepared by a team of villagers.

General Information

www.sitesofmeaning.org.uk - over one hundred pages of text, images, maps and information.

www.youlgrave.com - information about local services

www.peakdistrict.gov.uk - website of the Peak District National Park Authority

Map OS Explorer OL2 - The Peak District – White Peak Area

SECONDARY PROJECT – for Sixth Form Students

This pack is based on a project run by artist Rose Butler as part of *InscribeNOW*, a project which documented *Sites of Meaning* and created publicity materials including a leaflet, website and educational packages. Besides producing her own panoramic photographs, Rose worked with three secondary schools, introducing *Sites of Meaning*, its underlying principles, and aspects of working with text and image in a landscape environment.

The Project

In this project you need to:

- Explore *Sites of Meaning*, visiting the project directly and/or on www.sightsofmeaning.org.uk, particularly sites which blend poetry with the landscape (Bradford Dale Bridge (3), Over Rusden (4); Clapper Bridge (5); Smerrill (8); Friden Bends (11); Arbor Low (13)). Read the reflections that often tell you why this text was chosen for the site. Which texts do you think are most successful in their locations?
- Identify a personally significant rural or suburban location and document it with a digital or other camera. Consider making a panoramic view by 'stitching' together a sequence of images in Photoshop or similar programme, or by joining the printed images together by hand. Or perhaps make a series of images that reveals different aspects of the location when viewed from different angles.
- Look for lines of poetry, prose, or song lyrics that express what you feel about your significant location. Perhaps consider writing something yourself. Just writing out what you feel about the location and discussing it with others might be helpful.
- Decide how you will integrate your text with your location in a concrete manner – how the physical placing of the word and letters will fit into the landscape. Look how the sculptors have approached the use of text at the Roughwood Hollow Kerbstones (2), Sheep Dip (4), Bolderstone (10) and Friden Bends (11). Consider the work of concrete poets like Ian Hamilton-Finley. You must also choose an appropriate font and type style so explore how billboards and magazine advertising integrate text and image. Why do different fonts and styles evoke different interpretations and feelings?
- Produce a final piece which brings these different elements together and present it with a sketchbook of examples and experiments, together with a short written evaluation reviewing what you have learnt from the project.

Resources

1. *Sites of Meaning* boundary stones, Middleton by Youlgrave, Derbyshire
2. *Sites of Meaning* webpages – www.sitesofmeaning.org.uk
3. Ian Hamilton-Finlay - www.ianhamiltonfinlay.com – examples of concrete poetry
4. Billboards and magazine advertising
5. The National Learning Network <http://www.nln.ac.uk/materials/> has two useful typography packages