



# Perfecting Prose

AN award winning storyteller has helped pupils to perfect their prose with literary workshops in signing and song.





**C**ELEBRATED author and musician Tony Wilson tapped into the imagination of students at West Park Academy, Darlington, in a series of creative storytelling sessions.

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*Tony Wilson*

The former primary school teacher worked with pupils from reception to Year 6 to recite and create descriptive stories using sign language, music and props.

“Storytelling is fundamental to all children’s emotional and social development as well as being highly entertaining,” said Tony.

“When children create stories they immerse themselves in the literary process and using sign language really helps them to make links to the story as well as helping them to remember it.

“The children here have come up with some magnificent ideas and suggestions for stories, which is a real vindication of the quality of teaching they receive, and their emotional control, joining in and laughing in all the right places, has been extremely impressive.”





Pupils at West Park Academy have recently benefited from a full refurbishment of their school library which has created more places to enjoy reading, storytelling and working in small groups.

Year 6 teacher Sarah Savage said: "We have a real focus on reading for pleasure at West Park Academy and our new library is the perfect place for children to enjoy their books.

"Some of our older children have become school librarians and they help our younger pupils to choose new reading material and also listen to them read.

"We want all our students to enjoy storytelling in all its forms, looking at the spoken word, expression, intonation, music and signing, which all link together, so to have Tony come in today to work with the whole school has been an unforgettable experience."

Pupil Alex Lennie, 11, of Darlington, added: "Tony gave us some great ideas on how to structure stories and use descriptive language to make them more exciting.

"Some of his stories were very emotional and made me quite sad but others were really funny.

"I like storytelling and think what I have learnt today will really help me with my English skills in the future."



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