



Fool's Gold

The middle of February is suddenly upon us, so swiftly it caught me unawares so this edition of TLM is a tad late. In this edition we take a look at Fool's Gold – a graphic novel created by a group of high school students from The Dearne High in Yorkshire. The Fool's Gold project is one that has excited and inspired more than anything I have come across in ages!

This month I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the awesome Librarian Clare Thompson, author of the new [Website Reviews](#) column. Following on from Website Reviews we are introduced to Keris Stainton, one of YA authors to watch in 2010.

There is also a question on purchasing adult non-fiction stock for teen collections and I would be most grateful if anyone who purchases books for teen collections would have a go at answering it if you have time.

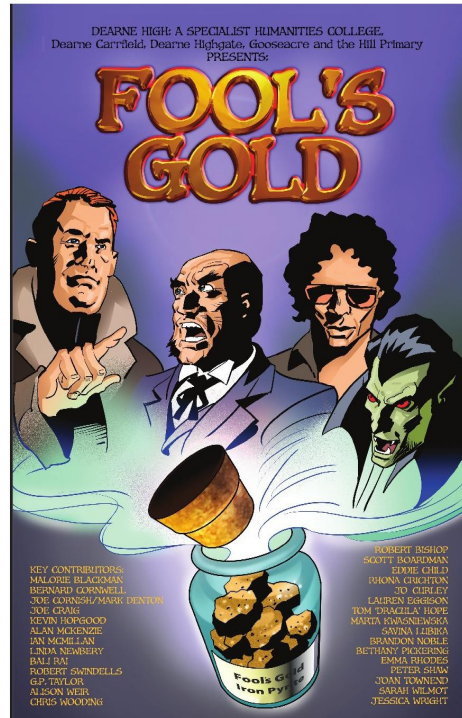
Walker Books is offering a workshop with Salem Brownstone creator John Dunning as a prize in a Young Adult Art Competition.

This month the Eight Questions With... section has been replaced with an interview with the creative team behind Fool's Gold.

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Did you hear about the schoolgirl who was so excited about a book she found in the library called How to Hug?

It turned out to be volume eight of an encyclopaedia.



In early December 2009, a friend and colleague pointed me in the direction of an article in the on-line edition of the Times Educational Supplement. The article was about a group of students from The Dearne High School in Yorkshire who had created a graphic novel titled Fool's Gold. The first thought that crossed my mind after reading the article was: "I wouldn't mind getting my hands on a copy!"

I duly fired off an e-mail to the marketing person who was named as contact. She put me in contact with Peter Shaw – the Deputy Head of the school. We exchanged e-mails regularly and the more I learned about the project, the more excited I became about what the school was and is doing. I learned that Fool's Gold is the second book that has been created by students at The Dearne High.

Teens get a lot of bad press – they can't/won't read, are unwilling to get involved at school, a complete lack of 'proper' English; the stereotypes are almost without end.

The Dearne High is showing what can be done with engaging young people through Graphic Novels and a spark of passionate creativity. This project shows that it is possible to engage young people in a literary endeavour and create something wonderful!

Find out more about Fool's Gold here: <http://bit.ly/flsgld> and stand a chance of winning a rare full-colour edition signed by the students and staff of The Dearne High who were involved in its' creation.

Website Reviews with Clare Thompson

Clare Thompson is a school librarian in Glasgow who is interested in the use of the web for book marketing and promotions, particularly for teenagers. As well as being a marketing tool, publisher and author websites can form a fun part of your reader development plan.

This is the first in a series of reviews of websites about, advertising, or otherwise enhancing the experience of books for teenagers.

www.harperteen.com

This is a multi-layered website use to promote the titles published by Harper Collins' teenage imprint, which is based in US.

Readers can browse on various different levels.

Books

As well as a random selection on the title page, you can choose [what's hot](#) (best-sellers) [new releases](#), and [upcoming books](#) – useful for librarians and teachers as well as teenagers.

Authors

This page acts as a portal for specific authors which are published by Harper Collins - most authors have some sort of interview on their page, which can help kids get to know who they are reading. Unfortunately, the events page lists things going on in the US. There is also a list of specific [author websites](#) and blogs.

Browse Inside

I am currently loving this feature, which gives readers a chance to look at a book before buying or borrowing. I have used it to

promote certain books in the library, and also as a sweetener to pupils who are waiting patiently for a title to be returned, so that they don't lose interest. Another great feature is that you can use a bit of code to embed a book title on your website or blog, also known as a widget!

Contests and Features

There are usually a few contests ongoing, and the features are sort of mini-sites for specific books. Make sure to check out the [pod-cast](#) section – you can listen to it from the site or download it through iTunes. Recent episodes have featured LJ Smith, Kelley Armstrong and Melissa Marr.

Other Stuff

Guess what! HarperTeen are also on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [My Space](#) and [Youtube](#). I can testify that the Facebook updates are regular and well subscribed.

Micro-sites of note

Emily the Strange

Emo teen with cat – good extras.

Pitch Black

Focusing on gothic / supernatural fiction. Separates books in to those suitable for a lover, fighter or biter. I can thoroughly recommend [Pimp my Coffin](#) if you have 15 minutes to kill.

Authors to Watch in 2010: Keris Stainton

I've been writing stories for as long as I can remember (I spent much of my teen years writing stories about George Michael falling in love with me so I've obviously always had a good imagination), but I didn't write a novel until 2004 when I took part in National Novel Writing Month (a challenge in which you have to write 50,000 words in the 30 days of November). That book is still unfinished, but in 2006 I did NaNoWriMo again and wrote a YA book called Forget Me Not about a girl who wakes up in hospital with a head injury and no idea who she is. That book managed to get me an agent and then, thrillingly, a two book deal.

Della Says: OMG! was a bit of a surprise really. My publishers decided they'd like Forget Me Not to be my second book rather than my debut and so asked me to write

something else. When I was a teenager, my sister had a party while the rest of the family was away and she was supposed to be staying at a friend's house. When I got home, I couldn't find my diary. It wasn't missing for long and I found it under my mattress (with a very unpleasant message scrawled across one of the pages), but while it was lost I was a nervous wreck, wondering who might be reading it. If, back then, someone had taken my diary the worst they could probably have done was read it out at school or, at a push, photocopy the odd bit. But now with all the social networking? Potential for huge embarrassment. And so that's what I had happen to poor Della.

Della Says: OMG! will be published 6 May 2010 and you can read the first chapter here <http://www.keris-stainton.com/books.html>

Purchasing Adult Stock for Teen collections

I have recently been speaking to colleagues about purchasing adult non-fiction titles for teen collections. Several people have stated that they often find it difficult to obtain titles that are suitable and appropriate.

Has anyone that purchases books for their ten collections had a problem with finding books through their suppliers and if yes how have you managed to overcome it?

I have asked this question on the YLG mailing list and received a few responses but I would be grateful for more feedback. If you are able to respond please e-mail your answer to teenlibraryservice@gmail.com

Thank you!

CILIP Training: Reader development for children and young people 16th March 2010

What is the role of libraries in encouraging reading for pleasure among children and young people, and how can they fulfil it successfully? How can they engage reluctant and less able readers and what can they do about boys' reading? Appropriate resources are just one component of the reader developer's tool-kit. There are many others that libraries must put to use in order to build

and maintain reading enjoyment.

<http://bit.ly/9X815i>

Win a Comic Workshop with Salem Brownstone creator John Dunning (courtesy of Walker Books)

Walker Books is offering a Comic Book Workshop with creator John Dunning – please see the accompanying flyer for more details.

Win a signed full-colour copy of Fool's Gold by entering the Teen Librarian Fool's Gold Competition here:

<http://bit.ly/flsgldcomp>

The competition is open until the end of February and is open to anyone who would like to enter.

Edited by: Matthew Imrie
Articles by: Clare Thompson, Keris Stainton & Matthew Imrie
Special thanks go to students & staff of The Dearne High for answering the interview questions

All submissions of articles, reviews & ideas are welcome and can be sent to teenlibraryservice@gmail.com

Subscribing to Teen Librarian Monthly is free just send an e-mail to: teenlibraryservice@gmail.com

The Fool's Gold Interview

How did the project start – would you be able to give me some idea of the history behind the Fool's Gold project?

Mr Peter Shaw, project lead says:

The project developed from my insistence on implementing the following philosophy: Everything we do at the 'Dearne High: A Specialist Humanities College' is about raising academic standards and the absolute pursuit of excellence for our local and wider learning communities. How can we teach children to be outstanding writers without providing real purposes, real locations, real audiences and high quality teaching and coaching? How can we help our children to become fully rounded human beings without developing their understanding of their locality, the Yorkshire way of life, our National identity and the wonders of the wider world? How could our children have achieved all of these aims without publishing a book called 'Fool's Gold?' I didn't think they could...until they had...

The title 'Fool's Gold' captured many of the ironies that modern teachers in Yorkshire are working with. After the closures of the mines, the textiles industry, the steel industry and dwindling fish stocks, the Yorkshire economy now relies on tourism to generate the majority of its income. The main idea for the book was that Yorkshire's tendency to lament the loss of past glories is like an unhelpful search for 'Fool's Gold,' which is now being replaced with a full and meaningful recognition of Yorkshire's future potential that is like finding 'Pure Gold.' My four main strategies to make the book unique and worthy of note were to 1.) Ensure that all the children taking part would appear as themselves within the storyline 2.) Enlist the support of as many 'A' lister young adult fiction writers as possible 3.) Ensure that a substantial part of the book would be in a graphic novel format and 4.) Select prominent and varied tourist spots which led us to devise visits to Scarborough, Whitby and the National Coal Mining Museum.

When I gave the plot synopsis to our children and staff they turned it into what it is...

An introductory question to begin with – who are the Iron Pyrates and how did they become involved with Fool's Gold?

Mrs. Joan Townend, events and marketing and the main photographer says:

Scott Boardman, Brandon Noble, Lauren Eggison, Savina Lubika, Bethany Pickering and Jessica Wright are the 'Iron Pyrates.' They were some of the authors included in the college's first book – 'Out of the Shadows' – An Anthology of Fantasy Stories,' our first self published book. During one of the promotions for the first book- (a visit to Barnsley Library and a signing at WHSmith)– the idea for a graphic novel was born. I remember it well... The first conversations about it took place within an extremely noisy shopping centre café during a lunch break. We were sat around a table with GP Taylor, Mr. Shaw, Bethany Pickering, Scott Boardman, Brandon Noble and myself. GP Taylor volunteered to be a main character and offered to work with us in Scarborough and Whitby. These became two of the three main locations for the book.

Although the Pyrates are the 'heroes' of the tale I noted that there were five schools involved in the story. Roughly how many people (students & teachers) were involved in the creative process?

Mrs Joan Townend says:

The four primaries that came along on the trips were The Hill Primary, Gooseacre, Dearne Highgate and Dearne Carrfield. We had 8 staff and 45 students on each trip to Scarborough, Whitby and the National Coal Mining Museum, often using different staff and students on each. The main coordination of a very large group of collaborators and a complex creative process was undertaken by Mr. Shaw, Mr. Child, Mrs. Crichton and I. A further 12 staff including the Head teacher, also made invaluable personal contributions to the book as a whole. Of course the children did the majority of the hard work that made it happen! The Iron Pyrates wrote most of the prose and dialogue and made most of the decisions about the content and ordering of the frames. Our young ICT team developed skills quickly and became experts

in the art of turning my photographs into graphic art. We all thoroughly enjoyed it, but it was hard work... We have had a fantastic time seeing it in print and are really enjoying the readings, sales events and quite extensive publicity that Fool's Gold is now getting.

How long did the whole process from conception to completion take?

Scott Boardman, student writer and main character says:

The whole process started all that time ago when 'Out Of The Shadows' had just been published, back in 2008. I remember there was an idea for a sequel that nobody really took seriously at the time, after all we were used, like most writers, to writing on our own, rather than as a team. As things went on and Mr Shaw pushed the idea...we realised that we had something that could actually work. I think it was May 2009 when we actually started work on writing it and the end result we have now was finished about three months ago in September/October. It took about nine months from conception to completion.

Was the entire graphic novel created in-house – cover design, layouts, graphic design and layout etc. or were parts of the process outsourced?

Mr Eddie Child, who led on ICT design throughout the book, says:

The novel was created in a variety of ways, in line with the deliberate and varied presentation styles throughout the book. The 'photo book' graphic novel images were created by students either in house, or at Foulstone CLC.

The prose sections were written by teams and individuals. Some were outsource, i.e. those written by famous authors, others were written in house i.e. those written by staff or students.

The hand drawn sections were again a mixture of in-house and outsourced. Some were drawn by one of our students (Marta Kwasniewska); others were drawn by reputed comic artist Kevin Hopgood including the cover images.

In the acknowledgements Fool's Gold is referred to as a 'virtual reality graphic novel' – can you explain the concept?

Mr Peter Shaw, project lead, says:

That was a bit of fun... Virtual reality

television involves celebrities appearing as themselves. No one can really tell what is planned, i.e. what is happening for real, or what is just acting. The narrative structures and designs within 'Fool's Gold' went on to be a lot like that... I remember having to think particularly hard about how to adapt the absolutely standard disclaimer that appears on the copyright page of virtually every book. Ours went on to read:

"Whilst this book includes real living persons and places, it is important to point out that the book's dramatic events and characterisations are largely fictional and included with the very kind support and permissions of all those involved."

Just as a virtual reality television programme evolves through the interaction of its characters so does a 'virtual reality graphic novel...' We had to be very flexible with planning until we knew exactly how and when some of the writers, artists and photographers could be included.

'Fool's Gold' also has a fairly substantive number of books that inspired its' unique blend of styles. These are all referenced within the novel itself and include contributions from the authors – i.e. graphic influences – 'Dopple Ganger Chronicles,' by GP Taylor and 'Malice,' by Chris Wooding – literary content influences – 'Room 13' by Robert Swindells and 'The Mariah Mundi' series by G.P. Taylor – the use of MSN – novels by Bali Rai and the ingredients of the historic novel – Alison Weir and Bernard Cornwell.

The list of key contributors is a veritable who's who of UK Young Adult literature A-listers, how were you able to get them all involved in Fool's Gold?

Bethany Pickering, student writer and main character says:

Well, I think the important thing to remember is that a lot of people were very interested in 'Fool's Gold.' Once the extent of the project was properly explained, it really did provoke a range of questions, such as; Could this actually be done? How could we manage it etc....? So I think it was partly curiosity that got so many people involved. However, it was also a lot of persistence on both the students and the teachers' part. When we first began emailing those involved, we didn't honestly expect anything back, but after mere days there were reams of responses that

really amazed us.

I think, after the first few contributors agreed, it became much easier to persuade others to become a part of the 'Fool's Good' team.

What was it like working with the authors, which ones were the most inspirational to you on a personal level?

Savina Lubika and Lauren Eggison, student writers and main characters:

It was absolutely fantastic working with famous authors. I remember that being 'allowed' to sit, eat and talk with G.P. Taylor was like being treated as a successful adult. It was great being able to call him Graham as well. He was incredibly kind to us in agreeing to be a main character and was one of the funniest people we have ever met! In fact he has worked with us for four full days without charging us for any of it...

Mr Peter Shaw, project lead adds:

They're absolutely right. Graham's exemplary support spurred us all on to persuade many more children's writers to work with us a voluntary basis in return for a highly purposeful educational outcome. We were really grateful to Chris Wooding, Alison Weir and Linda Newbery who wrote sections on a fully voluntary basis and for Robert Swindell's assistance in editing his cameo sections into his own voice. I also remember reading Joe Craig's endorsement and seeing just how powerful our 'specialism and community work' was embodied into a story, that in many aspects was as 'real' as it was 'fictional.' In fact, I think the real inspiration is now coming from 'Fool's Gold's growing 'reading community' more than the original 'writing community' that produced it. Grovel.org.uk, a graphic novel review site said:

"It's not every day that you see a 130-page graphic novel produced by school children but Fool's Gold is a notable exception. This book has come together through the collective efforts of the pupils and teachers of Dearne High, a Yorkshire school that's trail-blazing new ways of interacting with its local community and the wider world.

You'll have to alter your expectations about what a book by children might be like.

Featuring a multi-layered story with additional material by a number of professional comic writers, artists, editors, photographers and novelists, this is an extraordinary feat of co-operation, merging real people from the

school with local folklore and storytelling. A phenomenal achievement."

What was it like having to work in a group? Did working in a group make the creative process easier or harder?

Bethany Pickering, student writer and main character says:

This question definitely made me smile, as do most of the memories of the 'Fool's Gold' team. I think the answer to this question is both.

On one hand, it was difficult to organize different parts of the book, especially with every day school to deal with as well. It seemed we were all operating on different time scales, and at one point, we were sure it wouldn't fit together. However, it was also a great experience to the work in such a diverse environment. The Writing/Character team, who were key behind the ideas of the book all knew each other quite well from our previous book, *Out of the Shadows*, so that made things slightly easier (even though there were some horrible arguments in the more stressful stages), but then there was also the ICT team (in charge of the production and editing of images) to work with and outside contributors.

I'd definitely say the group approach made it more interesting...!

r the students that wrote the scripts for the pages illustrated by Kevin Hopgood – how did it feel to see your work drawn on the page and did he capture the images you saw in the your minds eye?

Scott Boardman, student writer and main character says:

How did it feel to see my work drawn? It was amazing, to think that the drawings in 'Fools Gold' that once started as nothing more than an idea are now fully fledged drawn artwork and are published in a book. It's just absolutely amazing. I never imagined that anything like the end product would come from it. It's still a little surreal to me, and I find it almost crazy how Kevin Hopgood managed to draw what we were thinking so accurately.

A question for the artist Marta Kwasniewska – the other contributors had their writing drawn by an artist. What was it like illustrating Bali Rai's piece and how does it feel to see your artwork in print?

Marta Kwasniewska, student artist and main character replies:

I was lost for words at the time. At first I was a bit embarrassed, particularly when I received my school planner and saw that one of my drawings from 'Fool's Gold' was on the front cover!

Mr Shaw, project leader says:

Actually Marta now has quite a 'fan base.' Lots of our children and staff have commented very positively on the quality of Marta's illustrations and Kevin Hopgood was delighted to colour them for her.

Is becoming involved in the publishing world a career any of you are thinking of for your futures?

Bethany Pickering, student writer and main character says:

Many of us consider or have previously considered a career as a writer. Scott Boardman has already written a novel, and is in the process of getting it published. Brandon Noble shares the ambition, and is currently working on several pieces. Whether or not we all plan to go into this career, we all share a love for literature, both producing and reading.

The girls in the group do have different plans, as far as I am aware, but we still maintain it as a much loved hobby, and will probably aim to publish as an option in later life.

Brandon Noble, student writer and main character says:

Definitely, I have wanted to be an author as long as I could remember. With our graphic novel being supported and recognized, by an increasing number of prominent writers and reviewers, it's given me a glimpse of what you can achieve and get from it when you set your mind to it. Plus, with advice from the many successful writers involved in this novel, it's given me a whole new level of support for trying to reach my goals and dreams.

Why are graphic novels so appealing to teens?

Scott Boardman, student writer and main character says:

The reason why Graphic novels are so popular with teenagers, what I think anyway,

is that many teenagers don't like reading a large quantity of words. A graphic novel gives them something a little easier to read and for some, something more enjoyable than reading through just text. Also, as they access pictures it gives them more of an idea of what the author is thinking and wanting to communicate.

Do you have any ideas on how Graphic Novels can be better utilised in schools?

Scott Boardman, student writer and main character says:

Well of course...they could all buy ours and attempt similar writing processes themselves! Other than that... Graphic novels could be better utilised in schools by using them more, because of how many teenagers will prefer to read from a book with pictures. More teenagers will be willing to read and learn if they have books like that. I don't think that full text books should be removed from schools, but because of teenagers' willingness to read graphic novel styled books, more should be produced and used.

Was there anything particular that you enjoyed or disliked about the project?

Jessica Wright, student writer and main character says:

Well, where do I begin...I enjoyed the trips to Scarborough, Whitby and the National Coal Mining museum, they were good research, and we took a lot of pictures that helped us later on. I also liked that we were all friends from the beginning, so it was easier to communicate and get on. I can't say I disliked anything, the deadlines and Photoshop part was hard, but we pulled through it, so it was good!

Did you learn anything during the project that you wouldn't normally have learned?

Jessica Wright, student writer and main character says:

I learned that working to deadlines can be frustrating and hard, but without them, we would not get anywhere in life. I also learnt how to work in a team, and if you imagine success, it will come to you; also that if you work hard, it pays off and you really appreciate the work that you and your team-mates have done.

Where can any interested parties obtain copies of Fool's Gold apart from [Amazon](#)?

Mr Peter Shaw, project lead says:

The best way to purchase the book as an individual is to email j.townend@barnsley.org I would strongly recommend going for the black and white interior version that is printed on high quality silk paper with a satin sheen – ISBN – 978-1-907211-74-4. These books can be purchased and collected from the college itself for just £5.00! The same book can also be posted out to a given address at a cost of £9.00 (to cover postage and packing) and the book also retails via Neilson at £9.00 for bookshops and libraries to order multiple copies.

If you want the far more expensive colour deluxe version – ISBN – 978-1907211737 then I suggest you enter Matthew's competition to win a specially signed one, or part with quite a lot more money to buy it via Amazon...

What does the future hold for Dearne High's fledgling publishing empire?

Mr Neil Clark, the Headteacher states:

The publication of 'Fool's Gold' represents a significant landmark in our School Improvement journey... 'Fool's Gold' has and will continue to act as a catalyst to increase students' interest and enjoyment of reading and writing alongside the development of vital Personal Learning and Thinking Skills such as creative thinking, independent inquiry, self management, effective participation and team working, vital to individual and collective success in our increasingly competitive global market.

Brandon Noble, student writer and main character says:

Who knows!?! With the majority of us starting to focus on their school career choices, the Dearne's publishing empire will also be starting to get a new group of kids to produce stories and novels. But I think I speak for all of the Iron Pyrates when I say that we would all be very responsive to any further work involved in promoting and selling our latest book 'Fool's Gold,' including that for this interview...

Mr Peter Shaw, project lead adds:

The future is very 'golden' indeed. Our writers are now producing feature articles about 'Fool's Gold' for a significant number of magazines with circulations of 50,000 and 80,000, not to mention their appearances in a

raft of websites relating to promoting reading, comics, developing literacy skills and libraries. We thoroughly enjoyed the Teen Librarian organising and publishing our first ever 'proper interview.' May the best person win the only signed copy of the full colour version in existence ... and who knows... they might even get included in a forthcoming sequel....!