

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Liverpool		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> (15) Archaeology		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Grand Designs in Ancient Greece: Transforming cross-curricular teaching and learning through play at primary and secondary levels.		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2002 - 2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Matthew Fitzjohn	Senior Lecturer	2002 to date
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2016 - 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>Fitzjohn's collaborative schools project, <i>Grand Designs in Ancient Greece</i>, combines his research on ancient Greek houses and households with innovative multimedia activities that engage learners through play with LEGO. <i>Grand Designs</i> has transformed the practice of primary and secondary teachers and the experiences of thousands of students in schools across England. <i>Grand Designs'</i> classroom resources have enhanced teaching within the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2 - Key Stage 3 (KS2-KS3), giving teachers without specialist knowledge the tools to teach Ancient Greece (History), and facilitating innovative cross-curricula teaching of Arts and STEM subjects. <i>Grand Designs</i> has inspired teachers' creativity in developing their own resources in many subjects, and raised pupil participation and engagement, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>Fitzjohn has undertaken a broad range of research on houses and households in the ancient Greek world (from the Iron Age to the Classical periods). Fitzjohn's work on the archaeology of Greek houses in Greece and Italy explores ideas on the economics of house construction, embodied learning, and the role of bodily practices on identity formation. His research also explores architecture to understand ancient Greeks' expression of cultural identity and social organisation [3.1], perceptions of landscape and temporality [3.2, 3.4], and the experiences of habitation [3.3]. Three key findings from Fitzjohn's research are the starting point for this impact pathway:</p> <p>First, our comprehension of life in Ancient Greece is richer if we understand how individuals, households and communities organised themselves to design and construct the houses in which they lived, rather than only seeing them as the spaces in which activities took place [3.1, 3.2, 3.4]. Fitzjohn has identified how the material expression of identities can be seen in domestic structures. He argues that the evidence of hybrid forms of existence as expressed through material culture represent different forms of identity expression and equality that were experienced across Sicily in the Archaic period.</p> <p>Second, recent years have witnessed a significant interest in the identification of patterns of tasks and the short time scales of everyday life. To date, however, in the field of classical archaeology there have been few attempts to explore patterns of activities in the ancient Greek world and how these patterns may have constructed a sense of place. Fitzjohn's research on house construction in several Greek sites from mainland Greece to the Western Mediterranean explores economic activity and landscape perception. Informed by concepts of lived space and the rhythms of daily, seasonal and annual tasks, and offers a more nuanced appreciation of life in the ancient Mediterranean. Publications 3.2 and 3.4 explore these arguments to present a new understanding</p>		

of Archaic Megara Hyblaea, a Greek settlement located in eastern Sicily, which, due to its location, history and level of preservation, has been central to discussions of urbanization, agriculture and identity in the ancient Greek world.

Third, in Ancient Greece, daily life and experiences in the home caused bodily transformations that affected people's quality of life and altered perceptions of self, as well as economic productivity in the household. [3.3]. Fitzjohn's research enhances our understanding of the quality of life in ancient Greece by moving from focusing on statistics of floor space and construction costs to an evaluation of health and wellbeing of the household. The novelty of this approach lies in combining archaeological evidence for cooking and heating in the ancient Greek home with new non-archaeological research from the disciplines of medicine and public health, (as well as data from experimental archaeology), to reconstruct physical wellbeing in the past, a key criterion in classifications of quality of life. Fitzjohn's reinterpretations of vernacular buildings bring to the fore issues of wellbeing and embodiment in order to enhance the ways that archaeologists and ancient historians examine quality of life in the ancient world.

### 3. References to the research

3.1 Fitzjohn, M., 2007. Equality in the colonies: concepts of equality in Sicily during the eighth to six[th] centuries BC. *World Archaeology* 39: 215-228 [Available from the University on request]

3.2 Fitzjohn, M., 2013. Bricks and mortar, grain and water: tracing tasks and temporality in Archaic Sicily. *World Archaeology* 45: 624-641 [Available from the University on request]

3.3 Fitzjohn, M., 2013. Hearth and home: evaluating quality of life in the ancient Greek world. In: Building, dwelling, and living in the ancient Greek world. Online working paper and REF14 submission <https://livrepository.liverpool.ac.uk/14673/>

3.4 Fitzjohn, M., 2015. The economics of house construction and the temporality of daily life: Quantifying Construction Practices to understand Economic Organisation, Time and Space in Archaic Megara Hyblaea. 133-142. In Di Castro, A.A., C.A. Hope & B.E. Parr (eds), *Housing and Habitat in the Ancient Mediterranean. Cultural and Environmental Responses* (Babesch Supplement 26), Peeters: Leuven. [REF 2014 submission. Available from the University on request]

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Fitzjohn's research-based classroom resources (over 70 documents) have enhanced content and supported teachers to deliver curriculum on Ancient Greece to thousands of children in England. The history of Ancient Greece is a topic in the National Curriculum (KS2) [5.2b] but there is no statutory guidance on how to teach the subject (<https://tinyurl.com/y6n7nug8>). Consultation indicated that few primary teachers had adequate knowledge or resources to teach Ancient Greece [5.4e]. Use of *Grand Designs* resources has significantly increased the content and teaching time devoted to daily life in Ancient Greece, and has transformed teaching and student experience in primary and secondary schools. A-level teachers at Blackpool Sixth have said "Fitzjohn's research has proved extremely beneficial for staff and students. The project supports the curriculum, further promotes engagement with the subject and is a valuable tool for the classroom" [5.1d]. The Headteacher of Kempsey Primary School believes "The impact and implications of his research will be with us for many years to come" [5.4e].



In 2016-2017, Fitzjohn began collaborating with 14 teachers and approximately 800 students in 8 partner schools (in Merseyside, Yorkshire, the Midlands and Sussex). Since then, c.800-1000 students each year have used *Grand Designs* resources, and an increasing number of teachers (average 8 per year) have used them. Since 2018-2019, the project has collaborated with 12 more schools (in Yorkshire and the northwest), and has provided events and training workshops in Blackpool, Leeds, Cardiff and Belgrade, Serbia [5.10], enabling hundreds of additional teachers to enrich their curriculum and teaching practice, transforming the learning experience of thousands of students.

### Enriching curriculum content

Fitzjohn's research on construction provided the building blocks for one of the key themes in *Grand Designs*' classroom activities. Fitzjohn's use of architectural energetics [3.2, 3.4] inspired the design of activities in which pupils use LEGO to learn-through-play about house construction in Ancient Greece [5.10i]. The Headteacher of Patcham Junior School has stated "Teaching of history has been enhanced with the use of LEGO as it... gave learners a tactile stimulus whilst learning about Ancient Greek dwellings and other structures of historical interest." [5.8c]. Learners use LEGO to build miniature Greek houses and household mosaics, to learn about how ancient houses were built, and to explore properties of materials and methods of construction [3.1, 3.2, 3.4]. At Dobcroft Junior School, teachers believe "The combination of archaeology, art, maths and LEGO is fabulous." [5.3b]. These cross-curricular materials successfully blend the arts and STEM curricula, including History, Maths, English and ITC. "The Mosaic Maker resources really inspired younger pupils and provided discrete cross-curricular links with numeracy" [5.5d].



### Transforming teaching practice

Visualisation using IT and physical materials is a strong theme in both Fitzjohn's research [3.1] and the teaching resources provided to teachers [5.10i]. At Liverpool College, Classics teachers have been inspired to develop methods for revising A-level literature modules, by asking pupils to display a scene or character from the *Aeneid* [5.6c]. Visualisation activities are highly successful with secondary school pupils and support attainment. Fitzjohn's resources have been "an incredibly useful tool to further consolidate learning of the ancient world" [5.1d], prompting teachers to make alterations to their teaching in broader topic lessons [5.6c]. They have been used "to compliment the literary aspects of the Ancient History course and allowed us to explore aspects of Greek culture in a highly original and engaging way." [5.1d]. The resources "encourage some colleagues to try out different teaching strategies out of their preferred comfort zones" and they have inspired Latin teachers to develop "more creative approaches to vocabulary learning with Year 7 pupils" at King Henry VIII School [5.5c] and Year 8 pupils in Liverpool College [5.6c].

Fitzjohn's research has directly inspired primary teachers to shift from traditional, single-topic teaching and integrate themes across the curriculum, blending History with ITC and English storytelling with Geography and Maths [5.2c, 5.2d, 5.4c, 5.8c]. Teachers have used LEGO models as the context for constructing narrative and learning about the past, combining History and English subjects [5.2c, 5.4e, 5.8c]. *Grand Designs* resources and activities have not only influenced the teaching of Ancient Greece but also topics such as "The Great Fire of London... and in Geography, pupils were inspired to use the LEGO to construct volcanoes." [5.4e]. The use of LEGO to scaffold learning particularly supports SEND pupils "as inspiration for their writing."

[5.8c], and supported "...concentration and engagement with their learning...[for] children who might normally have been turned off during the lesson" [5.4e]. "Dr Fitzjohn's activities were particularly useful to support some of our SEND pupils and those more reluctant writers when used in English and topic work. One boy wrote an extended story using a LEGO story starter. Mr Hands...was really delighted by this achievement" [5.4e]. In Secondary Schools, the project has led teachers of Philosophy, Religion, Ethics (PRE) & Computing to utilise Lego and playful learning to create activities that help students to visualise abstract concepts and ideas [5.5c].

### Improving student engagement

Use of the resources has increased pupil engagement [5.2c, 5.4e, 5.6c, 5.7b, 5.8c]; teachers believe that they are an "Absolutely FANTASTIC resource to use with pupils" [5.10e]. "[Pupils] really enjoyed the topic work and seem to have benefited from learning through play" [5.4e]. The resources encourage "patterns of collaboration" and "performance with factual recall" [5.5c], and "have engaged reluctant learners and really provided a level of depth to classroom discussion" [5.1d]. Pupil feedback indicates that 84% learnt a lot about life in Ancient Greece, 80% enjoyed the activities and half of them would like to learn more [5.4f]. At Kempsey, "Year 5 pupils, who had previously used Lego in their Ancient Greek lessons to plan and build Greek dwellings had transferred this knowledge to construct Mayan Temples. During their Independent Learning Opportunities these pupils were able to discuss the similarities and differences between Mayan and Greek civilizations" [5.4e]. Year 8 pupils have been so inspired by *Grand Designs* resources that they are creating activities which will be used in local primary schools as part of the Roman Coventry 2021 project. A teacher at Coventry reported that "Fitzjohn's Team meeting and resources on mosaics for primary schools was influential in giving the [Y8] Team a direction...The Team is incredibly motivated...They work on this outside regular lessons and parents have responded incredibly positively about their children's enthusiasm during Parents' Evening." [5.5e]. During the 2020 closure of Kempsey primary school the Headteacher reported that "a number of children...turned to LEGO for some of their learning activities. One boy even created a fantastic LEGO story based on Beowulf which he filmed and sent to his class teacher. This was clearly because of work he had done in previous years and his enthusiasm for the story and his learning was clearly enhanced by his use of LEGO and his feeling that it was "ok" to learn this way" [5.4e].

### Reshaping pedagogy beyond project partners

As a result of the success in schools, in 2019 Fitzjohn was invited to develop the primary (KS2) Classics Hub at Blackpool Sixth Form College [5.1]. At a workshop one teacher "went away feeling inspired and motivated to incorporate his hard work into my teaching... I will definitely be using Dr Fitzjohn's resources in the future as they are not only extremely helpful but also very well put together and easy to use." [5.1d]. The project has also inspired teaching practice for language teachers in the UK and in Europe. In 2019, after working with teachers at Cathays High School in Cardiff [5.10a], Fitzjohn was invited to present a conference workshop on using the resources to teach languages [5.10b], where the Head of ELTA Serbia "identified great potential in combining your work and second language acquisition" [5.10c]. Following an invitation to deliver a plenary speech and workshop at an international English Language Teachers conference in Belgrade, 96% of the participants (total 25) stated that they would like to use these materials in their teaching [5.10c]. Project resources have been available on *Times Education Supplement* website since 2018. They have received over 1,174 views, and 8,740 resources have been downloaded [5.10e]. Download peaks followed workshops at Cardiff, Serbia and Leeds in 2019, indicating engagement and intended use of the resources [5.10b,5.10c, 5.10d]. 5\* reviews state that "students became engaged and enthusiastic", and teachers "have recommended them to partner schools in our Academy Trust." In 2020, the resources also "helped me to support my son learn about Greece during lockdown... It was a really interesting way to bring history to life for an 8 year old boy" [5.10e].

In 2020, Fitzjohn was invited to develop a series of workshops on his innovative cross-curricular teaching practices for trainee and newly qualified teachers at the University of Brighton (delayed until 2021 due to Covid) [5.10f]. Brighton's Department of Education works with over 300 schools, and its online resources reach 3,500 schools, creating enormous potential to expand the *Grand*

*Designs* project and influence the teaching of Ancient Greece and related subjects in primary and secondary schools in England. Online and in-person events are planned to take place in 2021 [5.10f].

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

**5.1 Blackpool Sixth.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Participating schools; c. Emails; d. Testimonial; e. Classics For All; f. Flexible Faculty Fund)

**5.2 Carfield Primary School.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Participation letter; c. Testimonial; d. School newsletter; e. Year 3 curriculum; f. Ancient Greek pottery; g. Adventures of Perseus; h. Excellent Excavation; i. Homework project)

**5.3 Dobcroft Junior School.** (Includes: a. Information; b. and c. Emails; d. Student feedback; e. Archaeologists Day; f. Twitter; g Week of Archaeology)

**5.4 Kempsey Primary School.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Participation letter; c. Email; d. School Governor's report; e. Testimonial; f. Student feedback; g. Mosaics; h. Mysterious Mayans)

**5.5 King Henry VIII School.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Participation letter; c. Emails; d. Testimonial; e. Email; f. Newsletter; g. Twitter)

**5.6 Liverpool College.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Participation letter; c. Testimonial)

**5.7 Ormskirk West End Primary School.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Review; c. Video tour; d. Excellent Excavation; e. Twitter)

**5.8 Patcham Schools.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Participation letter; c. Testimonial; d. Ancient Greeks; e. Excavation timelines; d. Grand Designs models)

**5.9 Priory School.** (Includes: a. Information; b. Participation letter; c. Email; d. Classroom slides; e. Grand Designs; f. Assessment questions)

**5.10 Additional Evidence.** (Includes: a. Cathays High School, Cardiff; b. Cultural Threads Conference, Cardiff; c. ELTA Conference, Belgrade; d. Celebrating Education Conference, Leeds; e. Times Educational Supplement; f. Teacher training, Brighton; g. Potential partners; h. Atkinson Museum, Southport; i. Grand Designs in Ancient Greece)