

Sherlock Holmes visits Bill Ford Child Development Center

Elementary, my dear watson

Sherlockians know that Sherlock Holmes didn't really say that phrase, but we also know that elementary school students aren't too young to learn about The Great Detective.



Sherlock Holmes Visits Bill Ford Child Development Center

By Regina Stinson

A while ago I was contacted by Beth Trader, a teacher at Bill Ford Child Development Center in Dearborn Heights, to do a presentation on Sherlock Holmes for a group of children ranging in age from 5-9 years old. As a rather peripheral member of the Beacon Society, (a scion formed to introduce Sherlock Holmes to the younger generation), I thought this might be a chance to make a contribution. I contacted a few Sherlockian friends and some Beacon Society members for ideas and advice. I received several encouraging responses and began to formulate a plan. I was even able to persuade my dear friend Roy Pilot to agree to assist me with the presentation. I use the word "assist" loosely, as Roy really carried the show with his captivating style. I mainly provided the props.

We began by introducing ourselves and finding out if the children recognized the name "Sherlock Holmes." Then we launched into the Daffy Duck cartoon, "Deduce, You Say!" The kids really got a kick out of that. During the short film, I set up a display table with such items as a deerstalker, a pipe, a magnifying lens, a cape-coat, and several children's Sherlock Holmes books and videotapes. When the film concluded, Roy described what Sherlock Holmes was famous for and some of the things Sherlockians do to have fun. We also talked about clues and how they led to the solution of crimes and how Scotland Yard often came to Holmes when they were baffled by a crime. Roy asked the kids what sorts of clues they thought Sherlock Holmes might look for and their answers were extremely perceptive considering their young ages.

At the conclusion of the presentation I passed out small gift bags, each containing two Sherlock Holmes stickers and a miniature magnifying lens, and Roy donated a few children's books. The kids were terrific and Roy and I had a lot of fun, too! Just think, this might have been these kids' first introduction to Sherlock Holmes and you never know—some of them might be future Sherlockians. We certainly hope so!