Term two

Wessex Weekly

END OF TERM NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

The glitter is safely packed away, the party music is fading into the distance, the stages have been stored and the classroom decorations are boxed up for next year. It has been a fabulous past few weeks at Wessex where we have rounded off the term in style.

These past few weeks have given every child in the school the opportunity to perform to parents, carers, family and friends. Our pupils in reception performed a lovely traditional nativity which was heart warming and really special to those who came to see it. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 provided brilliant performances to very appreciative audiences where the choice of songs ensured that the audience left with a spring in their step and were tapping their toes to the music. Pupils spoke with clear voices and we really enjoyed the fact that every child had a chance to shine on the stage. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 performed carols and Christmas songs to friends, families and carers on Wednesday. All performers, no matter how large or small their part, should be congratulated for their gusto and energy given to their performances. Behaviour was excellent throughout and we are of no doubt that parents and carers will be proud of these performances. Thank you to everyone who attended to support the children with their performances, helped them to learn lines, sang songs together at home, helped source costumes or accessories.

Attendance remains a priority at school and although our current attendance is slightly lower than last year, we are pleased to see so many children who have 100% attendance and have attendance above our school target of 97%. We have had a lot of children off with coughs and colds recently; it is important to remember that children should attend school if they are under the weather or have a cough or cold. Also, a reminder that children could be off for the morning and then attend school for the afternoon if they are better or come to school after some pain relief. Remember that we can't authorise time off school for holidays or trips abroad to see friends or family - our policy is to issue fines, for pupils who have periods of unauthorised attendance as per the national threshold.

This term has seen us have our first Share Your Learning Session where parents had the opportunity to come in to school and see their children's books and learning. Children loved the opportunity of sharing their work with their parents and also parents commented so favourably about this opportunity. We will be having more of these sessions in the Spring and Summer terms so parents can get the chance to share their children's learning and successes again.

Also, we had our Talent Show, where Imogen, Talia and Amelia in Year 4 were chosen to represent the school at the Maidenhead Lions' Club Talent Show at Furze Platt school following our initial school Talent Show to select our entries. The three children performed and represented the school so well - huge congratulations to them for this.

We have continued to have very well received school tours for pupils who are starting school in September 2025.

We have also developed fantastic links with the new nursery, Little Red Hens, who have visited us on a number of occasions with their pre-schoolers to gain experience of what school is like and get to be a little more familiar with a school setting. Mrs Corbett and the EYFS team also invited Little Red Hens nursery and Cox Green nursery to watch the nativity performances.

Our community engagement has also included our Glee club singing at the Cox Green Community Centre providing entertainment to people who are recovering from strokes. Mrs Eves and Mrs Phillips - thank you for your continued efforts with Glee Club. We look forward to finding out more about the performance at the O2 arena next term! Watch this space! We have continued our good links with Maidenhead Magpies Football Club and have some Anti-Racism workshops lined up with them in the new year.

We have continued to refresh areas of the school building too - nearly every classroom has had new carpets thanks to Mr Porter's dedication and hard work! The school environment is looking fantastic and we are continually proud of it when visitors come to see the school.

This term, there has been a renewed focus on the work that your children complete when they arrive at school each morning. Teachers have been working very hard to create activities that match your children's levels and help them to move their learning on. Some children have received booster sessions from their teacher in the morning and others have a bespoke plan to follow. This is yet another reason why your child should be arriving at school before 8:55am. There are a higher number of pupils who are arriving at school later each day. It is vitally important for your child to attend on time so that they do not miss out on any key learning.

There is some staffing news to highlight to you. Mrs Andrade, our Poplar class teacher, will be moving on having been with us through the Autumn term. We wish her lots of luck and fortune in her new venture and thank her for her dedication and care to the children during the time that she has been here. Mrs Conlon, who many of the children know, will be taking on the class teacher role in Poplar class after Christmas.

We must acknowledge the hard work and effort from the whole staff team. The winter term is long and tough and staff have worked incredibly hard to deliver our curriculum to the children. From our front office and site staff to all of our teachers and teaching assistants, we are very proud of their efforts and appreciate their hard work.

From all of the pupils, staff and governors at Wessex, Merry Christmas and a very happy new year to you all.

Mr Beavan

Dates and reminders

Wessex Weekly



Diary dates coming up

Monday 6th January 2025
INSET DAY - Pupils not to attend

Tuesday 7th January
Pupils first day back at school
Chertsey Toy Museum visiting Year 1
Prospective Parent drop in session 5pm-6pm

Wednesday 8th January
Year 3 Road Safety Workshop

Thursday 9th January
Drama workshops for Yr 1-4

Friday 10th January
Mufi day for York house

Tuesday 14th January
Stay and Play for prospective pupils 9:15am

Wednesday 15th January
Year 4 Road Safety Workshop

Tuesday 21st January
Young Voices choir at the O2

Thursday 6th February
Share your learning session - Year 1-6 2:45pm

Tuesday 11th February
Safer Internet Day

17th February - 21st February - Half term

Attendance

Lower School: Ash & Alder Joint Winners with 99.5%

Upper School: Holly Winners with 98.3%

School attendance this week

87.7%

Yearly average is 94.3%

Aiming for 97%

Wessex Way feedback

Our Junior Leaders have been busy this term surveying pupils to gather their feedback to our Character Curriculum and Wessex Way. We are thrilled to report that pupils gave the Character Curriculum a score of 4.31 out of 5 with 98% of children responding saying that our Character Curriculum makes them think about being positive some or all of the time! This is brilliant to hear that the weekly sessions are making children consider their interactions with each other and continue to adopt the Wessex Way.

Children have suggested some character traits to fit into next term's sessions, which is brilliant to see too. Visitors to the school are always complimentary of pupils' manners and politeness. This was recently exemplified at the school discos where the PTA volunteers reporting that pupils were so polite when buying items from their shop!

Housepoint updates

The final housepoints for this term are as follows:

York - 3,280
Lancaster - 2,968
Stuart - 2,774
Windsor - 2,495

Congratulations to York for earning the most house points this term. Your reward of a mufti day will take place on the first Friday back after Christmas on January 10th.

Technology as presents

Internet matters have put together a digital toolkit for families. This will give you age-specific advice and tips to support your children online. When completing this, you can learn about popular apps and platforms your children use, get information about how to deal with any online safety concerns and received recommendations for digital tools to support their interests and wellbeing.

You can access the toolkit here.

Merry Christmas

Attendance

Wessex Weekly



The following children have attended school every day this year so far! Congratulations!

Rosie A	Abigail C	Oliver G	Cheryl L	George P	George T
Imogen A	Harry C	Freda G	Jolie L	Summer R	William T
Elliott A	Aiden C	Medi G	Dylan L	Zannah R	Annabel T
Kaiden A	Eliza C	Sam H	Magnus L	Ben S	Elsie U
Zoe B	Michael D	Lottie H	Ingso M	Ekambir S	Daniel V
Callum B	Jackson D	Jake H	Tariro M	Ellis S	Milo W
Luka B	Jessica D	Ali H	Ash M	Penelope S	Charlie W
Louis B	Henry D	Ava H	Sienna M	Beatrice S	Daisy W
Austin B	Megan E	Aiza I	Alex M	Oliver S	Greyson W
Arran B	Dominic F	Russell K	Zack M	Ellie S	Fynn W
Jamie B	Eliana F	Chloe K	Ciara M	Amy S	Harriet W
Sophie B	Azaria F	Abigail K	Dylan M	Harry T	Charlie W
Gracie B	Henry G	George K	Eloise N	Aiden T	Jake Z
Finley C	Dominic G	Reema K	Kiara O	Alexander T	Amaan Z
Jaida C	Eva G	Kleda K	Lola P	Victoria T	

The following children have met our school attendance target of 97%+ this year so far! Congratulations!

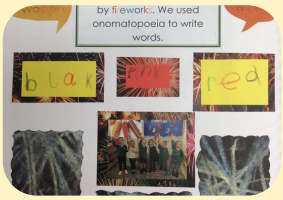
Adam K	Ellie-Louise G	Safi-Ullah Q	Francesco B	Ajwa A	Jack M	Georgie W	Sebastian K
Adam A	Arthur G	Shivaay S	Freddie F	Oscar B	Ciaran M	Xavi R	Imogen K
Xanthe B	Hughie G	Tanaaya S	Adam F	Hugo B	Maddison M	George A	Isaiah M
Kaiden B	Oliver H	Abigail S	Belinda K	Amber C	Niamh P	Harry A	Livia P
Darcey B	Aldrin J	Callum T	Darcey K	Chester C	Luis R	Charlie B	Emily P
Shaylen C	Isaac L	Sidney U	Anah K	Naithan J	Harlow R	Willow B	Zia S
Aiarna D	Jasmine L	Lily W	Elwood R	Jacob J	Indie R	Aidan G	Leo S
Mia D	Peter L	Lola C	Olivia S	Emaan K	Jack T	Mikey H	Robin T
Oliver E	Amelie P	Daniel A	Henry G	Kiwi K	Flossie T	Joshua H	
Maya F	Alessia P	Rose S	Selma K	Sophia M	Derriyan V	Ariz K	
Ava F	Daniel P	Hannah A	Jude W	Isla M	Georgia W	Malik K	

EYFS Term two

Wessex Weekly

Wow, another busy term of learning, exploring and developing new skills. We returned to school on fireworks day which was a great opportunity to learn about the history of the event and create some wonderful pieces of art. There were plenty of bright colours used as well as generous sprinklings of glitter! In their writing, the children used onomatopoeia to write words such as 'pop' and 'bang'.





Diwali was celebrated by a few of our children, so we loved sharing and learning more about the celebration of light. We learned about the different ways Diwali is celebrated around the world and saw more images of fireworks. Each child made a diya lamp using air dry clay and decorated them using bright colours. They took their lamps home and were all gifted a battery fairy light.

In Outdoor learning we linked our learning to our Talk Through stories text 'Stick Man.' We spent time discussing who was in Stick Man's family and compared to our own families. We collected sticks which we could use to make our own stick families and dressed them using pipe cleaners and feathers. We are very proud of our stick people.



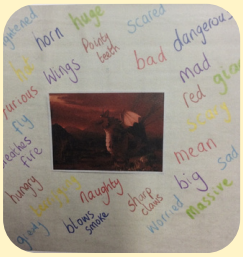


In writing, we have been using adjectives to describe the witch and dragon from Room on the Broom. We looked at the different pictures and came up with adjectives like 'magical', 'clever' and 'terrified' to describe the witch and 'dangerous', 'massive', 'naughty' to describe the dragon.









Wow, another busy term of learning, exploring and developing new skills. The children have learnt how Christmas is celebrated around the world. We discovered that one of the traditions is to send and receive cards and gifts. The children used their phonics knowledge to write their own letter to Father Christmas. They learnt about what an address is and what happens to a letter once it is posted. We were very excited to walk to the post box and post our letters. We sprinkled them with a little magic to make sure they reached the North Pole!











The Nativity is always a highlight in the EYFS calendar. It was an absolute delight to watch the children perform in front KS1 and families. They have spent time learning new songs, how to act on a stage or learn lines and performed in front of a very large audience. We are immensely proud of them all – it was an emotional time for parents and wonderful memories of the children's first Christmas performance.







Year 1 Term two

Wessex Weekly



Year One have had a busy and exciting second term.

In RE, we have been exploring the idea of religion and worldviews, understanding that people have similar and different beliefs and this is okay as long as we respect each other. We made mini people to show we are all part of our class community.



This term, we kick-started our materials topic with a hunt around the school. We looked at different materials, for example wood, plastic and glass and discussed their properties. We have also been doing some investigative science! We used pipettes and syringes to see if materials were absorbent or not. We are learning how to record our observations.



We've had loads of fun learning how to program Bee-Bots. We can make them navigate around a map, park under a bridge and turn around. Sometimes we got frustrated because the Bee-Bots seemed to go where they wanted and not where we planned! Then we remembered we hadn't deleted our previous instructions!



Constructing a windmill has been our DT project this term. What a challenge! We investigated how to make a strong structure. Then, we added sails and a rotor to make our windmill turn - it was a challenge! We also evaluated our windmills and thought about how we could improve them.

Thank you for all your wonderful pictures and special objects - we really enjoyed looking at and talking about them during our history lessons. We have been creating our own personal timelines and asking questions about childhood to a special visitor. We could not believe that some of our teachers grew up without computers and black and white TVs!!



Has anybody seen a red hat? In our English book, Bear lost his special red hat. Cheeky Rabbit had stolen it and Bear was extremely upset. We helped Rabbit say sorry by writing to him with our advice. It worked! He sent a video message saying thank you.

Year 2 Term two

Wessex Weekly

It has been another busy term in Year 2! We have been working very hard during the lead up to Christmas.

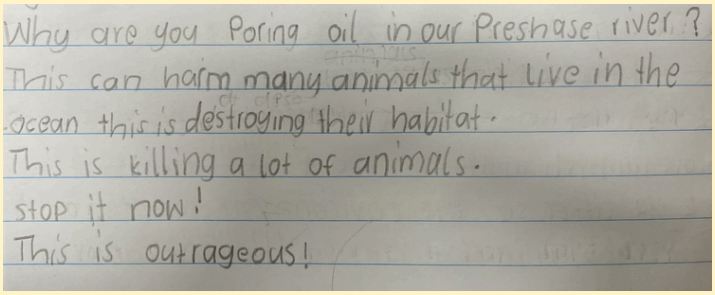
This term we have been reading two books that highlight the importance of conservation. We read 'The Journey Home' which was a story about endangered animals who travelled to an island and met a dodo. We wrote our own version of this story and chose different animals to write about.



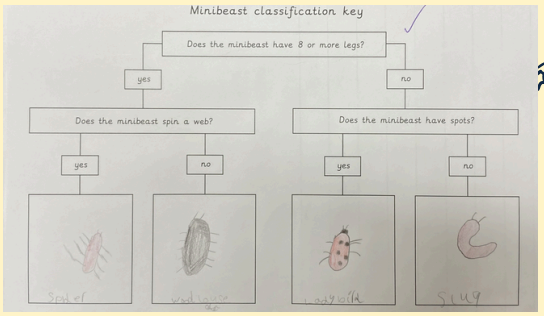




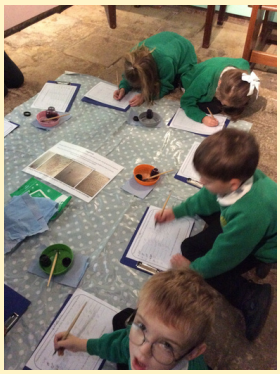
We also read the story 'We are Water Protectors' which was written in response to the Dakota Access Pipeline protests. The book tells the story of an Ojibwe girl who fights against an oil pipeline in an effort to protect the water supply of her people. We learnt the importance of water and created persuasive posters to raise awareness about the dangers of water pollution.



In science have been learning all about minibeasts. We have been on minibeast hunts and learnt about different microhabitats, such as leaf litters and the soil. We have had a wormery in class and conducted the experiment 'Why don't spiders stick to their webs?' We grouped minibeasts and learnt how to classify them using classification charts.



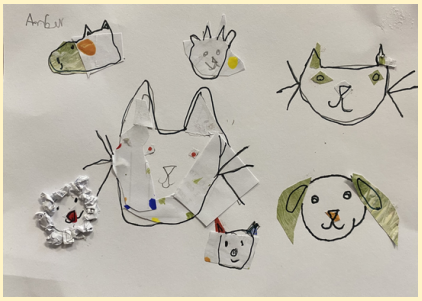




In history we have been learning about school in the past. We started by interviewing Mr Porter about his time at school. We thought of our own questions to ask him and learnt about how school was different in the past but also similar. We then went further back in the past and learnt about school in the Victorian era. We found out that teachers were much stricter and children wrote on a slate with chalk and not on a white board with a pen! We visited Eton College and were able to use dip pens and ink and some of us tried on the uniform that was worn in the past.

We have been extremely creative in art this term. We have been mixing primary colours to make secondary colours and then using paint to recreate different textures. We used many different tools to create our textures such as string, forks, nail brushes and sponges.





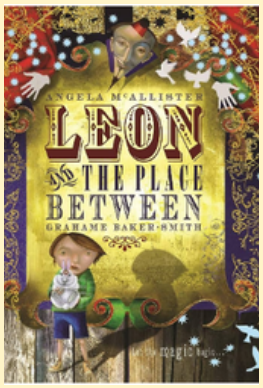
For maths this term, we have been learning how to multiply numbers and to identify the properties of 2d and 3d shapes. We used arrays to help us understand the 2,5 and 10 times tables and have been practising these in class. Ask us about our time tables!
We also learnt about faces, edges and vertices and went on a hunt in the classroom for 3d shapes and sorted them based on their properties.

In music this term, we have been learning about sound patterns. We learnt how to use music to call and respond. The unit was based on African animals and we created our own sound patterns that mimicked an African safari.

Year 3 Term two

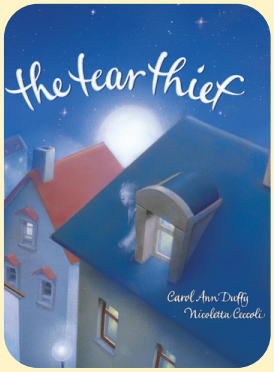
Wessex Weekly

We have had another brilliant and busy term in Year 3!

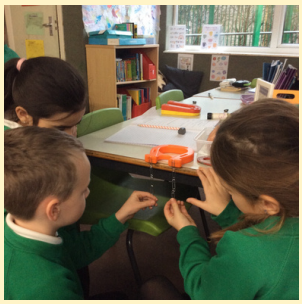


Through our story 'Leon and the Place Between', the children explored the author's language use and used it as the basis for their own descriptive writing. We analysed the character thoughts and emotions and took part in drama activities leading to the creation of dialogue writing. The children used the structure of the original story to write their own version, where the character enters a magical world.

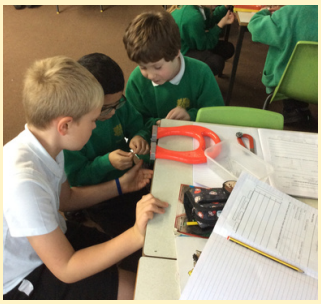
With 'The Tear Thief', we explored the idea that emotions could be matched with tears (water beads). We analysed the figurative writing within the text, different verb forms and present perfect form of tense. The children wrote a newspaper article about the mystery of the stolen tears.



This term in Maths, we have been busy learning our multiplication and division facts, solving calculations based on the 3, 4 and 8 times tables. We used concrete resources and images to support the children's understanding when explaining the links between repeated addition and multiplication. We focused on the quick recall of timetables and the understanding that the inverse of multiplication is division to develop our fluency.



As Scientists, we have studied 'Forces and Magnets', identifying different types of forces and the relationship between friction and the roughness of surfaces. We loved exploring types of magnets and investigating their strengths developing their scientific skills. We have also researched a question, changed variables, written conclusions and presented results as bars charts.



We loved making cushions for our DT unit this term. We designed our cushions using individual criteria, selected and cut the fabrics we used and used our threading needle skills with great independence. We learnt how to sew using a running stitch to join fabrics together and decorated our cushion using cross-stitch and applique. Look at how fabulous they turned out!









Gymnastics this term has focused on developing and applying travel and rotation on the floor, with hand apparatus and partner work through focused skill development, sequence creation and games. Our outdoor PE has developed our skills of throwing using a chest, bounce and overheard pass to outwit our opponents in small sided games.

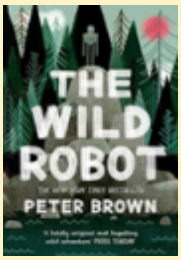




We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

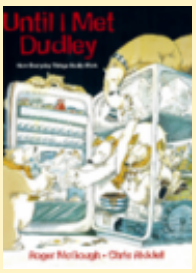
Year 4 Term two

Wessex Weekly





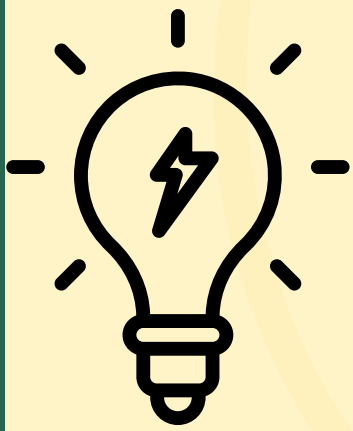
Year 4 have thrown themselves in to this term's learning enjoying some fabulous books. In English we have been studying the books 'Farther' and 'Until I met Dudley' for our writing focus and 'The Wild Robot' and 'Skygazing' in reading. The Wild Robot has become a firm favourite across both classes so far this year! Using the book, children have been developing their prediction and retrieval skills. I'm sure they will be keen to share with you the story of how Roz the robot finds herself on a deserted Island surrounded by only wilderness and wildlife.



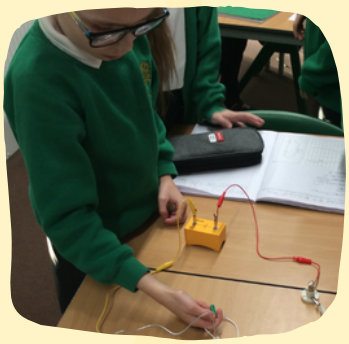


Within our writing lessons we have written letters, formal and informal texts about how certain inventions work and have added adverbial phrases and relative clauses to their work. They even came up with their very own exciting inventions.

In maths this term we have been focusing on multiplication and division. We have been learning our times tables up to 12x12 and listening to BBC Bitesize Supermovers songs to help us with these. We have also been learning how to use those times table facts to answer related questions.

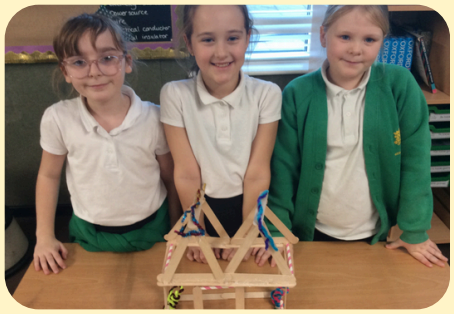


Our Science topic this term has been electricity. The children have learnt about how electrical circuits work, the importance of electrical safety. We have talked about the components of a circuit and how electricity flows through it. We have tested which materials make good conductors and insulators and also what happens to the brightness of bulbs if more are added to a series circuit. One of the most fun investigations was learning about how switches work in which the children made their own buzz wire games.



In History we have been looking at how children's lives have changed throughout time. We learnt that many children were sent away to work from a very young age to become apprentices in Tudor times or even worse sent down to work in the mines in Victorian times. Many of the children were very grateful to be living in current times! Luckily for Lord Shaftebury, laws were put in place to protect children and allow them to be entitled to an education.



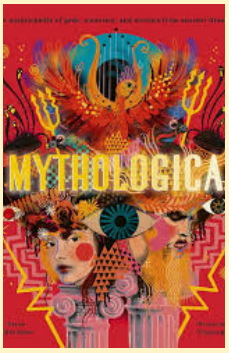




Design Technology challenged the children to design and make their own pavilion. They used glue guns to make frames and carefully selected materials suitable for cladding.

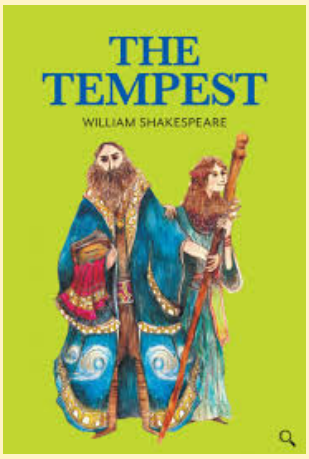
Year 5 Term two

Wessex Weekly



It has been a wonderful run-up to Christmas. The children have been working incredibly hard to achieve some of the amazing things this term.

This term, we have been studying the playwright William Shakespeare in English. We have explored the different languages used and analysed the various themes throughout the story of 'The Tempest'.



The children enjoyed learning about the main characters of this play and exploring the themes of vengeance and justice. The children then took these inspirations to create their own playscripts.



The children were given the stimulus of a terrible storm that brought their characters onto an island with a strange inhabitant. From here, they created their own stories which they had to progress through dialogue and stage directions.

Within reading, the children have been loving the range of books we have provided. We started with the exciting story of Vita, who while travelling through New York City, managed to help her Grandfather gain back her castle. With the help of her newfound friends, she can create an exciting yet cunning plan to trick her pursuers and gain back control of what was once lost.

We then moved on to an encyclopedia of sorts. 'Mythologicia' is an informative but engaging book about the different Greek gods, myths and monsters throughout this period of time. We managed to delve deep into the wonders of this world giving us a new perspective of the people of this time. I know this is a topic that got a lot of children engaged within their learning. This knowledge will be able to help them further when learning about the Greeks in more detail during spring term.

This term the children have been working extremely hard on the topic of fractions. We have been looking closely at equivalent fractions, converting between mixed numbers and improper fractions and adding and subtracting fractions with different denominators. We have been using our timestables knowledge to help us with this unit, converting the denominators as a strategy to solve more complex problems.



In Geography, we have been learning about the Alps, answering questions about where the Alps are, what it is like in the Alps and why people visit the Alps. The children researched the town of Innsbruck on-line, and then compared leisure activities in Innsbruck to that of Maidenhead. Sadly, no skiing is on offer in Maidenhead, but we certainly still have a lot on offer!



In our thrilling art exploration, we've uncovered the fascinating work of artist Cai Guo-Qiang. His adventurous techniques in installation art have inspired us to embark on our own creative journey. Drawing from his influence, we crafted imaginative installation art boxes, considering space and size with the use of mini figures. For our final project of the term, we stretched our imaginations to create real-life installations in the playground. From obstacle courses to a robot date, our creations showcased the boundless creativity of our young artists. It's been an inspiring term of artistic discovery and innovation!







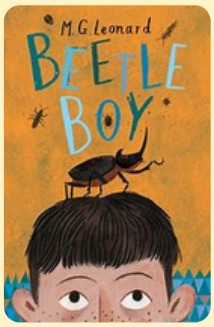


Year 6 Term two

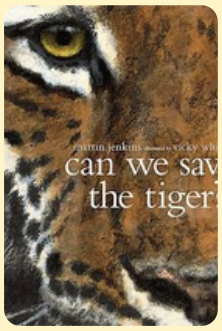
Wessex Weekly

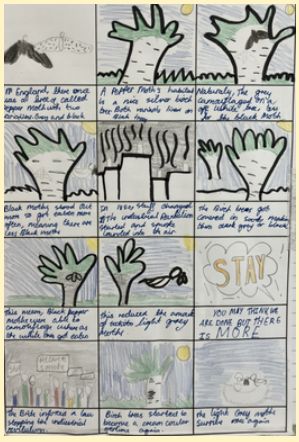
The children have been working so hard this term and we have progressed so well with the Year 6 curriculum.

This term, the children have loved exploring our class text Beetle Boy—a delightful adventure story about beetles with human-like traits. For our main writing focus, we completed Hugo Cabret by creating impressive biographies about the French film director Georges Méliès. Additionally, the children have been inspired by the remarkable fossil hunter Mary Anning, crafting wonderful stories based on her incredible life. It's been an exciting term filled with creativity and discovery!









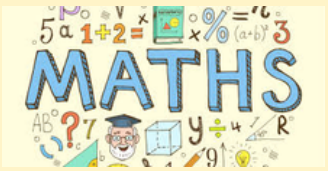
This term in Science, the children have been exploring evolution and inheritance. They investigated patterns in humans and other species, learning about inherited traits and how the environment can influence characteristics. Through the work of Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace, the children saw how careful observations can lead to groundbreaking scientific theories. By modelling the variation in finches and the process of natural selection, they gained a deeper understanding of how species evolve and the crucial role of fossils in supporting these ideas.
We also linked our learning to Literacy, focusing on the life of Mary Anning. The children wrote engaging narratives about her remarkable story, using figurative language to bring her journey to life. We hope you've enjoyed sharing these wonderful pieces of writing at home!

In Design Technology, the students were given the exciting challenge of designing a three-course meal using 3 key 'hero' ingredients. The first course was a pepper pizza pitta, which was a big hit with everyone, and we were thrilled to hear that some students even made the recipe at home! The second dish featured salmon. The children learned about the process of bringing salmon to the shops and then created delicious salmon fishcakes. For the final course, they put their baking skills to the test by making upside-down pineapple cakes. All the dishes were a success, and we are looking forward to see if any of our budding chefs end up on 'Masterchef' in the future





In History, we have been Investigating the causes of WW2; learning about the Battle of Britain; investigating the impact of the Blitz and evacuation on people's lives; and evaluating the effectiveness of primary sources, which is a skill that children will use in their history lessons in secondary school.



This term in Computing, Mr. Beavan has been guiding the children through the basics of Python, a popular programming language. They have been learning about loops, understanding how they work, and exploring how computers use them to repeat tasks. It's been a fantastic opportunity for them to develop their programming skills!



In Term 2, pupils focused on fractions and measurements. They learned how to use fraction rules to solve problems and explored both the metric and imperial measurement systems. They also practiced converting between kilometres and miles, a handy skill for when traveling to other countries.