

NEWSLETTER

for Blackwell First School - Blue Class



Welcome back after the half term break and what a good first half term we have had. The children have settled happily and quickly into Blue Class where they are working hard, with great enthusiasm and are stepping up to the higher Year 4 expectations. Our first two topics, 'The Vikings' and 'The Seasons' provided an inspirational start to the year. Visiting Bishops Wood, being crowned Wake 'n' Shake champions, going on an autumnal woodland walk, scarecrow making and ending with a 'live' family assembly were just a few of the highlights. All of that in only one half term and there are plenty more exciting learning opportunities in this half term too!

TOPIC

'Traditional Tales' is our new topic with 'The Willow Pattern Story' being the story of focus. We will start by exploring a real-life dilemma linked to books and reading. **'Redditch Borough Council are planning to knock down Redditch library and relocate it somewhere else in the centre of town.'** Dilemma-based learning engages the children in team work and problem solving whilst learning real-life knowledge and developing an understanding of different viewpoints.



The project the children will be working towards and having ownership of, giving their learning a purpose and making it more meaningful, is creating a story sack for a Yellow Class friend filled with stories, games and more, all linked to their learning. Greater independence is the skills focus that the children will have the opportunity to develop during this project alongside other key competencies such as resilience and problem solving.

Geography, Art and Science are the main subjects taught during this topic. PSHE, Music, Computing, French, P.E. and Philosophy for Children will be taught each week too. See our 'Curriculum' page on the school website for more information.

Through Art, children will learn about watercolour techniques as used by Georgia O'Keefe and J.M.W. Turner. They will explore examples of artwork and give opinions about them before trying a faded-edge technique and a 'wet on wet' technique. Linking to the Willow Pattern Story as explored in literacy, children will apply these skills to create their own Chinese landscape painting.

Geography lessons will focus on the use of maps of different scales to identify global features and use of lines of latitude and longitude to describe locations. Children will then use different geographical sources to find out more about the physical and human features of Germany, the home of the Brothers Grimm who wrote over 200 traditional tales. New learning will be used to compare Germany with England.

How will the big bad wolf's teeth be different from those of the billy goats gruff? Where would the three little pigs fit into a food chain? In Science, children will learn more about health, teeth and the digestive system. They will use observation and prediction skills in this topic as well as learning lots of new scientific language.

YEAR 4 JOB SCHEME

Two of our school values we help our children develop into are respectful and responsible citizens and aspirational individuals. Our Year 4 job scheme supports these values and it is lovely to share with you that all children, who wanted to take part, have been successful with one of their applications. We had a lovely time reading some of the fabulous references! Over the coming weeks, they will receive training and start earning Blackwell pounds. Soon we will have fresh bread (made by our bakers) for sale in Lettuce Eat, sparkly windows (thanks to our window cleaners) and many other keen entrepreneurs busy at it! Your child will need a purse or wallet in school to keep their well-earned money safe.



LITERACY

The Willow Pattern Story will develop the children's reading, writing and communication skills during this topic. The children will develop their reading skills by asking questions about the text, predicting, summarising what they read, discussing author intent and developing their inference skills.

Exposing children to the rich language in the text will develop both their speaking and writing skills. They will write a diary entry from one of the main characters and write a letter home expressing characters' thoughts and feelings. We will enjoy retelling the story and identify words and phrases that are memorable. The children will learn how to correctly punctuate dialogue and consolidate their use of subordinating conjunctions to extend sentences. The children continually work towards their personal writing targets and it has been great to see many children achieving their first couple of targets already.

In Spelling, the children learn how to spell words ending in -sure, homophones such as piece and peace and other spelling conventions such as the use of apostrophes for possession. Please see the homework sheet for the tricky words of focus for this half term.

NUMERACY

During Numeracy, children will be consolidating and developing their use of mental and written calculations for addition and subtraction and the application of these skills when problem solving.

Mental maths will focus on the 4 and 11 times tables, recalling number bonds to 100 and 1,000 (multiples of 50 only for the latter), doubling and halving numbers to 100 fluently (even numbers only for halving) and rounding any 4-digit number to the nearest 10, 100 and 1,000.

TIMES TABLES

Oh no you might say! We had to learn them and so do children of today! Learning times tables is a very important part of children's mathematical development and in Key Stage 2 we use these facts all of the time in many areas of the maths curriculum. We help the children learn them at school in a variety of ways from old fashioned chanting, to games such as bingo and Bing, Bong, Zong! The APP 'Squeebles' is also popular with the children. However, to help the children **learn them by heart** we need you to help us too! Please encourage your child to practise their times tables at home. Like daily reading practice, **daily times table practice** makes a significant impact on their learning. The aim is for them to be able to recall any of the taught times tables within 3-5 seconds. Thank you for your continued support. It makes such a difference.

Take a look back at last half term...



Exploring John Brunson's painting techniques



Exploring 4-digit numbers



Experimenting with pneumatic systems in D.T



Enjoying learning about The Vikings at Bishops Wood

If there is anything you wish to ask about, please come and speak to us at the end of the school day or send an email to office@blackwell.worcs.sch.uk. Many thanks. Miss Townsend, Miss Kuriger and Mrs Gwilliam