

Dear Parents

Happy New Year and just in case you have missed the 'subtle' clues around the room, welcome to Africa.

African animals will be the stimulus for all of our writing outside of Read, Write, Inc. We will be using non-fiction books and the internet to find out about various animals and the children will write fact files, poetry and their own traditional African tales throughout the term.

The children will learn that Africa is a continent and know how many countries there are within it. We will discuss the equator, talk about hot and cold countries and focus on some of Africa's physical features ie. desert, savannah, jungle. We will research the animals found in these habitats and learn how to classify them into mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, carnivores, herbivores and omnivores. We will also talk about endangered animals.

Year 1 will continue their science project about the seasons and hopefully as we drop into minus temperatures, we can make comparisons between our climate and that of Africa.

Art throughout the term is completely inspired by Africa. Basing our work on traditional African tales, the children have already started to paint in the style of Tinga Tinga art. I hope to use these tales and art work as a stimulus to our own story writing and the creation of a class book of new Tinga Tinga Tales.

We will be creating a collaborative piece of Batik work, showing the Savannah. We will build up hot and cold colours through colour mixing, have fun with printing our own animal patterns and use fabric dyes to create their own individually designed tabard, to wear on our African feast day at the end of term. The children will also make animal masks for use in the role play area and to finish the topic, we are going to have a D&T week and create our own African village.

Music will focus on drumming, percussion instruments, rhythm and dance and we will be teaching the children some of the songs from The Lion King.

PE will continue to be taught on alternate Monday afternoons and every Tuesday morning so please keep PE bags in school.

We will continue to alternate our Friday adventure mornings and will go out each week, unless it is unbelievably cold or a heavy downpour. This week, Friday 23rd January, will be Reception's turn. Although we have a few spare boots at school,

we don't have warm outdoor wear at school to give to the children if they come without their clothing, so please be advised that if you happen to forget, your child will stay indoors with Mrs Gibbs for that session.

RE will continue to focus on Bible stories, told so creatively once again by Beth. Thank you, Beth, so much, for all your energy and enthusiasm in bringing these stories to life. I have also invited another of our parents to talk to the children about the Jewish festival of Passover.

Numeracy will be planned according to your child's ability, but will cover number and place value; addition and subtraction; fractions of shapes; money; measures; beginning multiplication.

Ict will be used to support the curriculum in general and Year 1 will continue to develop their word processing skills and begin to learn how to 'cut and paste'. The children will continue with their individual RM Maths program and practise numeracy skills using Maths Base.

Please could I ask you for a donation of £6 towards the first half term's snack fund and may I ask you to check to see whether you have any of our spare underwear and tights at home, as we have completely run out.

If you have any African artefacts, recipes, printed fabrics, music etc at home, that could be used or shown during the topic, and you trust me to 'keep them safe', please feel free to bring them in.

I hope that I have given you a taste of the weeks to come and as always, if you have any worries or problems please come and see me.

Once again, Happy New Year and many thanks for all your support.

Sally Wharton