

Newsletter

The Den - Spring 2015

Dear Parents,

It has been lovely to see the children settle back quickly into school routines and see their engagement and enjoyment already in our new topic.

This term our theme is “African Adventure”. The focus of this topic is to understand the diversity of the physical features of Africa and how they differ from the United Kingdom. Children will also gain an understanding of some of the ways of life there.

Literacy

We will be looking at a range of narrative and non-fiction texts throughout the topic. We will learn to

- appreciate and re-tell a range of African myths
- write our own myth
- write book/story reviews
- read and understand feature of a biography (Nelson Mandela)
- write an autobiography
- appreciate a story which raises issues (Journey to Jo’berg by Beverly Ntando)
- write our own story

We will also continue with our development of grammatical understanding of the way sentences are constructed.

Reading

There will be a quiet reading time in the classroom between 8.45 and 9.00am every day when children will be expected to settle quickly with their reading books. Children will be given guidance in choosing books which match their reading ability. We continue to encourage children to read to an adult at home throughout the week and use their reading record to record their own feelings/responses to the text. We also ask if you could sign in your child’s creative learning log that you have heard them read at least once a week.

Numeracy

This term our topics will include-

- Using negative numbers in the context of temperature, placing negative numbers on a number line, and finding temperature differences.
- Multiplying and dividing 2/3/4 digit numbers by 10/100/1000 to create decimal numbers
- Relating fractions to division
- Identifying equivalent fractions, simplifying fractions and adding and subtraction fractions
- Reading and plotting (x,y) co-ordinates in a graph
- Adding amount of money using expanded and compact addition
- Counting up to find 3 digit subtractions (and beyond), to find change and price differences
- Using timetables and calculating time intervals
- Telling the time using analogue, digital and 24 hour clocks
- Measuring and comparing the perimeter of shapes
- Revising times tables
- Finding factors of numbers to 40

Science: Our Science will relate to the topic and will cover:

- The features of living things
- African habitats and the animals and plants that live there
- Classification of living things
- Identification and classification keys
- The feeding relationships between different things in Africa
- Comparison of human and animal digestive systems
- Investigate examples of herbivores, carnivores and omnivores

Art and D + T

The children will be looking at a range of African art from the wall hangings created by the Asante tribe to the batik pictures created in Mozambique.

We will be creating masks used for celebrations.

We will also be looking at the foods which are eaten in Africa

R.E./PSHE

We will be reflecting on the idea of water around the world and how it is drawn from one well. We will discuss the reasons for water scarcity and the problems this causes. We will respond and reflect on campaigns for clean, safe water in Africa and understand the work of water based charities.

ICT

The children will be able to give instructions to a simple programming software. They will be able to evaluate their instructions and consider if the order makes a difference to the working of the game.

Support you can give:

Below are some suggested activities that you can do, that will support the learning in the classroom.

Literacy – encourage your child to read across a range of genre and provide opportunities to discuss texts.

Numeracy – discuss time (e.g. television programmes), practise measuring (e.g. cooking, reading scales) and times tables facts

Topic- Look at atlases and encourage children to locate countries and capital cities.

P.E – Practise throwing and catching ball skills.

Music

The children have already learnt some traditional rhythms from Ghana on the djembe drums. They will learn songs from Africa and gain an understanding of the instruments used.

Geography/History

We will be using atlases to identify the countries in Africa and the surrounding seas. We will be looking at the physical and human features.

In History we will be learning about the history of South Africa and Apartheid. We will find out about famous people from the past, including Nelson Mandela. We will consider the first people in Africa and how they relate to us.

P.E.:

Please ensure that your child's P.E. kit is in school at all times and that they are provided with trainers and a sweatshirt for colder days.

In Gymnastics the children are currently receiving coaching from a professional. They are exploring different kinds of jumps and shapes that your body can make both on the floor and on the apparatus.

They are also continuing to develop their multiskills including team games, ball skills outwitting their opponents etc.

Homework:

Children will continue to use their Creative Learning logs for homework tasks. These will be sent home on Friday and collected the following Wednesday.

Please encourage your child to complete their homework to the best of their ability. As part of their ongoing homework, your child will need to continue to practise reading at home to an adult and to learn set spellings and times tables. Please sign creative learning logs when you hear your child read.

And finally:

We hope that you have found this newsletter useful in providing information on the activities of the Spring term. Please do not hesitate to see us at the end of the school day should you have any queries or concerns. We are continuing to make our programme as creative as possible and provide many opportunities for independent learning.