

Marvellous March

Curriculum Newsletter for Whimpe Primary School March 2023

This term has been extremely busy. The children have had a wide variety of learning activities and achieved some amazing things.

Thank you to all those who supported our theme days - World Book Day and Comic Relief; as you will see from the photographs the range and quality of the costumes were amazing.



World Book Day



On Friday March 3rd all the children dressed up as a book character. We held an assembly so everyone could try and guess the range of characters that had arrived at school that day. See how many you can identify.



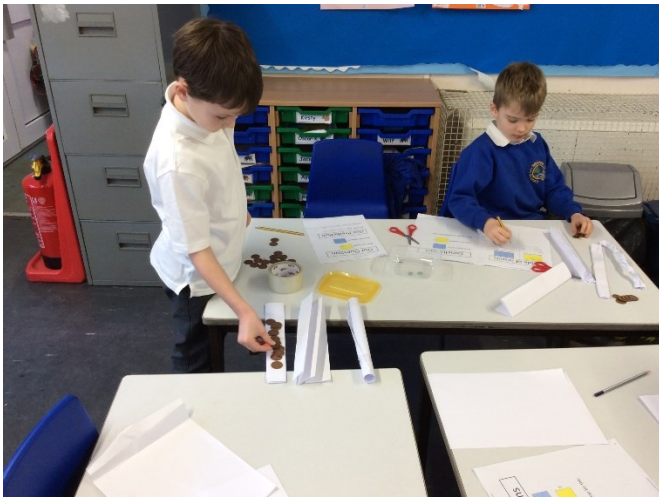
Rock Steady Music

Children across the school have signed up for music lessons with Rock Steady on Monday mornings. Instruments include keyboard, guitar, bass guitar and drums, and there is also an option to be on vocals. Usually there is an end of term performance for parents, but due to the limited number of weeks prior to Christmas, the children have performed twice this term. All the groups performed well and did an amazing job in front of a full hall of people. It was lovely to see how their musical skills and confidence to perform has developed. Well done everyone!

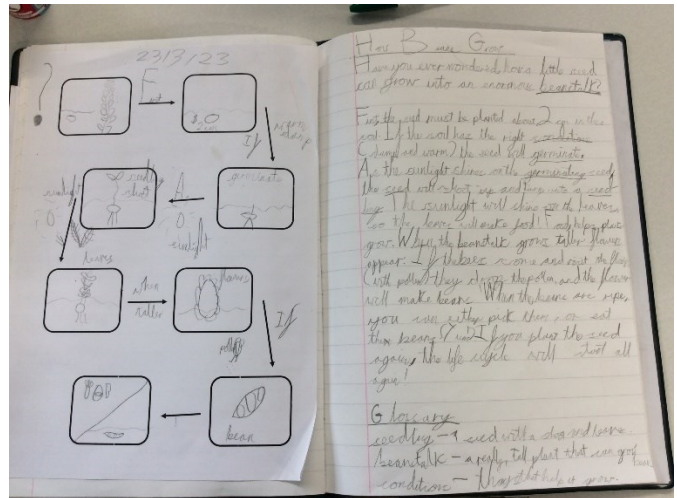


Ash Class

In Science, we started our spring term with a focus on materials and their properties. We looked at the suitability of materials for specific uses and explored how changing their shape could affect these properties. We finished the unit with an investigation into how changing the shape of paper could make a stronger bridge.



We focussed on plants during the second half-term and enjoyed watching a variety of seeds and bulbs change as they grew. We learnt some new vocabulary including germination, seedling and pollen and used our new science words to write an explanation of 'How Beans Grow' in our Literacy lessons.



In Art, we began the term with a focus on sketching buildings from around Whimple including our School. We then looked at the style of famous American artist James Rizzi and learnt about his real life houses known as 'The Happiest Houses in the World'. We loved using his cartoon, pop art style to design our own 'Happy Houses'.



We then focussed on the art of printing, taking inspiration from our plants topic. We experimented by creating prints directly from natural objects before designing our own stencils and potato stamps to create a repeating pattern with overprinted motifs. It was very messy work, but great fun!



In Jigsaw, we have been learning about setting personal goals and how we keep our minds and bodies healthy. We learned that it is important to keep our brains active and learn new things. We were challenged to learn a new skill. Some groups learned to count in mandarin, some recited a poem off by heart and others performed a dance called the Macarena! It was great fun and we were pleased when we had achieved our goals.



We have explored how we also need to spend time resting and doing the things we enjoy to keep our minds healthy as well as keeping our bodies clean, taking exercise and understanding medicines. We discovered which foods we need to eat in order to have a balanced diet and enjoyed making and then eating fruit kebabs as a healthy break-time snack!



Our design and technology project this term has been 'wheels and axles'. We investigated making two different types of chassis, one with moving wheels and a fixed axle and one with fixed wheels and a moving axle. After looking at a range of vehicles and their special features, we had to design our own. It was very challenging to then bring our designs to life and we needed a great deal of resilience and patience. We were very proud of our finished products and everyone had managed to make a fantastic vehicle that moved!



In geography, we have been learning about weather patterns around the world. We have compared weather in the UK with polar and equatorial regions. We loved finding out about the northern lights and created some effective artwork using chalk pastels to reflect our learning.



In computing, the children have explored programming using robots called Beebots and Bluebots. They have learned to predict outcomes from given algorithms, planned routes and written instructions to send their robot to a given place whilst debugging errors that occurred. They also now appreciate that giving specific and accurate instructions can be challenging!



Beech Class

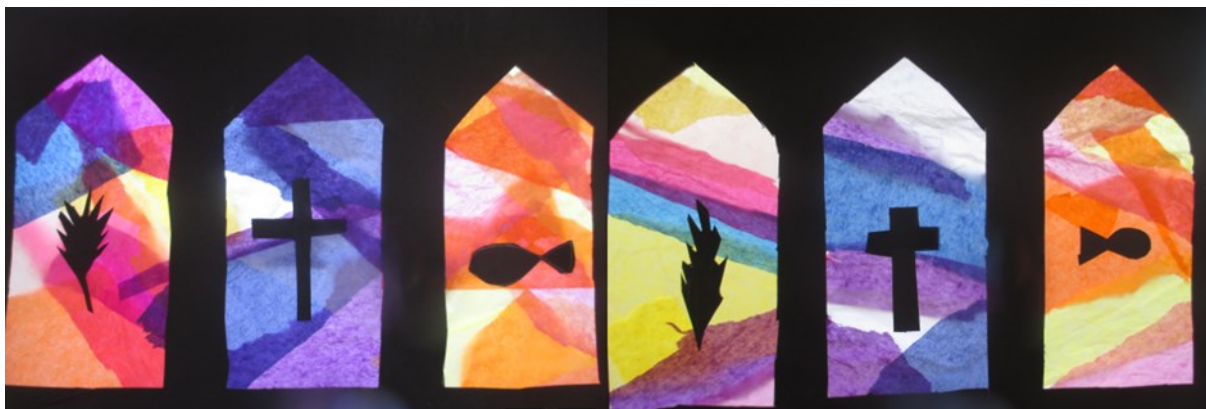


In Science last half term, we have been exploring electric circuits, how to join components and what makes a good conductor and insulator. This knowledge we are now applying in our D.T. work, investigating the different types of switches we can make for our nightlights.



The children have learnt about different types of forces, gravity, air resistance, water resistance and friction and how these affect moving objects. They have carried out a number of investigations and they had to consider the effect of altering a spinner to see the length of time it takes to fall.

Recently, the pupils in Beech Class have been working hard in RE, with Mrs Wall, to learn what people who are Christians believe. After remembering the Easter story, they thought carefully about Mary's feelings during this time - e.g. excited on Palm Sunday, sad on Good Friday, relieved and amazed on Easter Sunday. They then considered the colours that best represented those emotions and created a triglyph of stained glass windows with Easter symbols upon them. They are now on display around school for others to see and appreciate.



Earlier this term, Beech Class spent some time studying an American artist called Tony Stubbing and then using some of his abstract mark making techniques when creating a colourful piece of textile work. They used a batik method, which involved using wax to form an initial design, before then brushing coloured inks over the top. Finally, the wax is ironed away, beneath a layer of greaseproof paper, to leave a resisted pattern or image. We hope you like the results of their efforts.



Earlier this term, a coach from Premier Sport came into school and taught the pupils all about archery in two sessions. Once pupils had mastered holding the bow and loading the arrow, he then set them the challenges. These involved aiming at and hitting different coloured targets. Everyone listened really well, learned new skills and worked well in their teams to achieve points during all of the activities.



Elm Class

Music

At the end of February we were lucky enough to have a visit from a musician and author, Laura Loft, who led a fun and engaging story time where the children were able to participate in music and songs whilst learning about their emotions. She gave us a copy of her book 'Big Emotions' which the children have enjoyed revisiting in class.



Science

Our recent focus in Science lessons has been 'Plants'. We have been learning about what plants need to grow and have carried out an investigation, using cress seeds, to find out. We have explored our school grounds and garden to see which plants are growing here and have made some observational drawings of plants, fruit and vegetables using magnifying glasses to look closely at details.

We have also planted beans and checked on them every week to see how they have changed, recording the changes in our bean diaries. We have looked carefully at the structure of plants and learnt the scientific vocabulary for parts of a plant. We have chitted some seed potatoes and planted them in the school garden. We are looking forward to digging them up and eating them in the summer!



Art

This term we have been focusing on printing and the artist William Morris. The children enjoyed drawing their designs with pencil onto the foam boards and then used rollers and paint to print them.





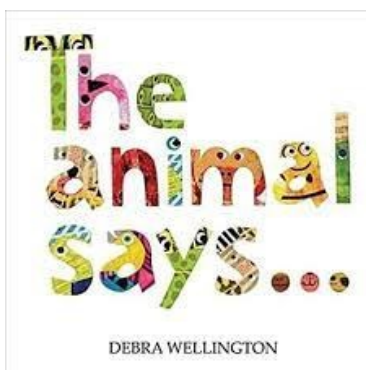
Fantastic Fridays

The children have enjoyed cooking, forest school and buddy reading on our fantastic Friday afternoons. They particularly liked the yummy hot chocolate on our most recent trip! They also had fun collecting something long/short, rough/smooth and light/dark and sharing their findings with their peers.



Author visit- 'The Animal Says...'

On Wednesday this week we were very lucky to have the author of 'The Animal Says...' visit us. She read us her book with some fantastic facts about different animals and the children enjoyed answering her questions after and making all the noises. The illustrations in her book are very similar to those of Eric Carle who we focused on in Art last term when looking at collage.



Willow Class



Another busy term in Willow Class - we have been happy to see the warmer weather after what felt like a chilly winter!

We have been working really hard to consolidate our learning from the autumn term adding new knowledge and skills.

In **Writing**, we have used the fantastic book 'The Day The Crayons Quit' to learn about the difference between formal and informal texts and tailored these letters to create our own - here is a fantastic example of the artwork that we created to go with it.

In **Science**, we have been looking at living things and their habitats, and learning about the different ways to classify living things in the world. We devised experiments by controlling variables and making predictions, to see how quickly microorganisms grow on bread under different conditions. The results are very interesting!



Sticking with the theme of food, in **Design Technology** we had the task of creating our own pizzas. We learned about the *design, make and evaluate* process and had to choose ingredients which we thought would appeal to our target audience. Luckily, the research stage involved trying some of the ingredients (and some pizzas!) to see which we preferred the most!





In our **art** lessons, we have learned about collage and how to use this method of creating a piece of work effectively, and more recently have been exploring materials used in textiles, and different strategies to sew elements together.

Our **Skills Builder** focus has been *staying positive* and we have talked a lot about our own perceptions of an event, and how that may differ to others in our group. We have discussed strategies for overcoming adversity, and the stages of emotions that we may experience in challenging times.



As we are now working more closely with a group of schools in the Exe Valley Federation, we were able to organise a set of fixtures with the Year 5 and 6 class at Silvertown School. We went on the bus and split in to three teams, and rotated through a series of netball, football and tag rugby games. This gave a great opportunity to use the skills we have been developing in **PE** and gave the chance to take part in more competitive games.



As we move towards the summer term, we are also spending more time discussing **transition** to secondary school, and trying to tackle the tricky questions about moving on for those in Year Six. While this is a subject that can cause a lot of anxiety, we have been very sensitive to each other's thoughts and feelings and have had some mature conversations so far! This learning will be ongoing throughout the summer term.

Oak Class

After looking at paper weaving, Oak made a woven, material wall hanging. The children were very resilient when they were learning the method and especially when they had to take a breath and go back to improve their pieces. They all should be super proud of their accomplishments.



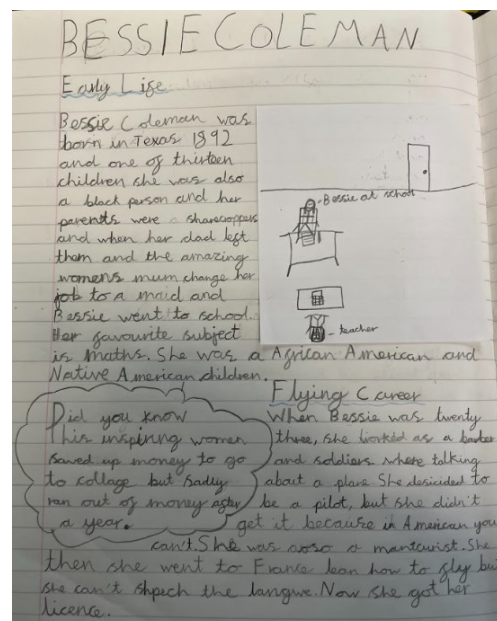
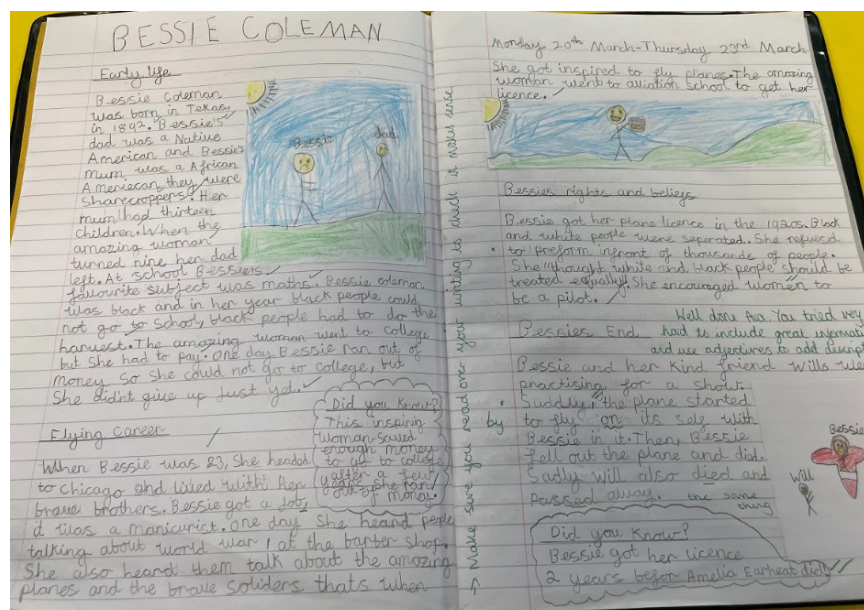
In our Design and Technology lessons this term, we have looked at healthy and varied diets. Oak class enjoyed reviewing some interesting pitta pocket recipes in order to help them with their decisions, when developing their own idea of a healthy pitta pocket. The children were then great at safely cutting and preparing our ingredients, ready to fill up our pitta pockets.



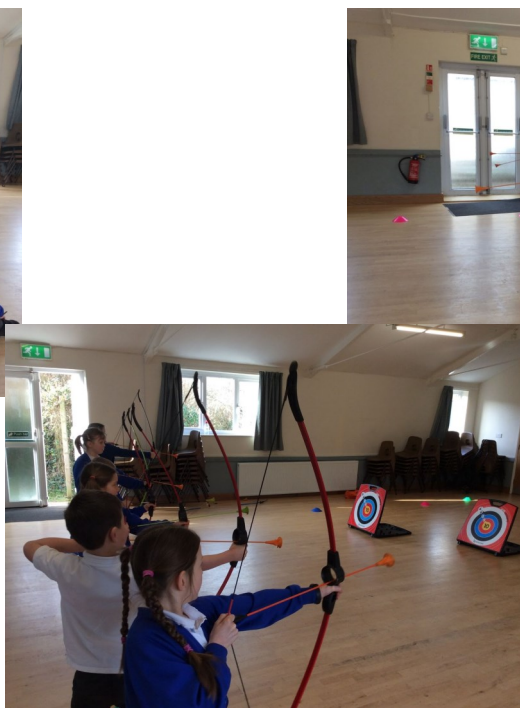
Many children were very surprised by how much they enjoyed eating their pittas that were full of vegetables. It was lovely to be sat in the sunshine watching them all enjoy their creations.



In English, we have most recently completed a writing piece about Bessie Coleman. It has been so amazing to hear from the children and parents about how much they have enjoyed learning and hearing about Coleman. The class have also become experts about many fantastically great women and have clearly enjoyed hearing of their amazing lives. Here are some examples of our writing:



Oak class thoroughly enjoyed two sessions of archery, this term. They worked hard to shoot at targets and the activity also used their problem solving skills to crack a code. As quoted from a member of Oak, 'the teacher was really great and fun' and 'the activities were exciting and active'.



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