

# Sensational Spring

## Curriculum Newsletter for Whimble Primary School

February 2025

Welcome to the third edition of our curriculum newsletter in which we share some of the things the children have been involved in throughout the first half of the spring term. As always, I am amazed by how much is covered and the variety of ways the teachers engage the children to help ensure they remember as much as possible. Alongside this, are the other additional activities provided to broaden their learning experiences and develop their essential skills even further.

On Friday 31st January, the children in Year 5 and 6 were taken to see the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. The children had been involved in a number of sessions in school, learning some sign language and body percussion to accompany two of the songs played, written and produced especially for these school performances. The theme this year was Sea Stories, and children got to hear some poems and songs linked to the sea. A wonderful experience for all.



## Elm Class

In our Science lessons this half term, we have been learning about everyday materials. We have found items we use everyday in the classroom that are made out of wood, plastic, metal, fabric and glass. We have sorted everyday objects according to the material they are made from, and thought about why those materials were chosen to create that object. We have also explored the properties of materials and used descriptive, scientific vocabulary such as hard/soft, shiny/dull, stretchy and stiff when describing the materials used.

We also linked our learning about materials to one of our Top 5 books, The Three Little Pigs. We investigated which would be the best material to make a house for the three Little Pigs and why.



In our maths lessons, we have been learning about weight. We have used a spring balance, as well as balance scales to measure and compare the weight of different objects in the classroom. We have been using the vocabulary heavy/light and heavier than/lighter than when making comparisons.



In Art, we have been focusing on the artist Eric Carle and the technique 'collage'. The children made some fantastic snowy pictures at the beginning of the term and more recently have made a collage based on Eric Carle's Flowers and also a lantern collage linked to our learning about Chinese New Year.



## Elm Class continued

In our number sense sessions, the reception children have been learning about repeating patterns.



In our Jigsaw lessons, we have been focusing on 'Dreams and Goals'. The children first tackled a few challenges in which they talked about not giving up even when it was tricky, and then they thought about their own goals.



In Design Technology, we have been exploring wheels and axles, with a variety of construction, ready to plan, make and evaluate our own vehicles.

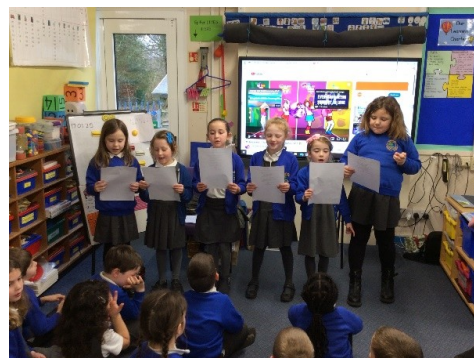


## Ash Class

At Forest School, we learnt about a craft called Hapa Zome printing. Mrs Alright showed us how to make an imprint of flowers and leaves onto bunting by carefully bashing them with large pebbles. It was really fascinating to see how the natural dyes from the plants coloured the fabric. We also enjoyed some free time to build dens, climb trees and explore nature in Winter.



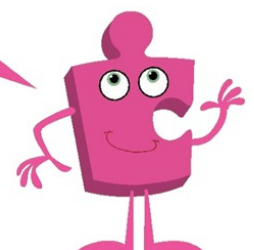
In PSHE, we have been finding out about our dreams and goals for the future. Jigsaw Jo set us some group challenges to help us learn to work together in teams to achieve a goal. The children demonstrated their growing ability to listen to each other, make compromises and share success. Well done Ash Class!



"Hi, I've set you some challenges. You can choose one to work on next time. Good luck!"

You can choose to:

- 1) Learn the Macarena dance
- 2) Learn to count in Mandarin Chinese from 1 to 10
- 3) Learn to count in French in 2s from 0 to 20
- 4) Make a colourful card to take home to your family with a special message inside it (you can make a card each but you have to agree and use the same design)
- 5) Memorise the poem "The Owl and the Pussy-cat" by Edward Lear

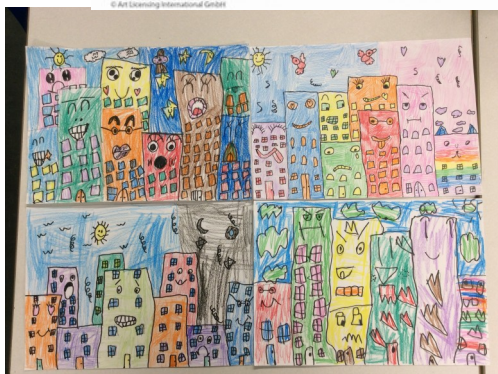


## Ash Class continued

Ash Class have been using balance scales to weigh a range of classroom items! Year 1 used non-standard measurements (cubes) and Year 2 used standard measurements (grams). They had to make sensible estimates before weighing each item. They recorded their results in a chart.



Our Art focus this half term has been drawing. We have explored a range of pens, pencils and crayons and drawn on different surfaces to see the effects. We looked at the various grades of sketching pencils and how we could create different shades and textures. We have also been studying the work of American artist, James Rizzi and created these fabulous 'cityscapes' in his style. He added facial features to the buildings to give them individual personalities!



## Oak Class

This half term may have flown by, but Oak have certainly packed a lot in!

In English, we started learning about the work of poet Matt Goodfellow and looking at different features of poetry, using them to create a range of animal poems. More recently, we have been learning about the features of persuasive writing, using a letter from the RSPB as our inspiration. Following on from a workshop with Lou from Recycle Devon, it was decided that we would write to persuade people to think more carefully about reducing, reusing and recycling.

This term in PE, we have been doing gymnastics and dance, creating shapes and sequences to learn and improve. We are fortunate to have some experienced gymnasts who have been excellent coaches in supporting their peers and giving demonstrations.



In Science, we have been learning about rocks. This has included studying different kinds of rock, their formation and uses. Following on from their previous learning, Year 4 were able to explain about volcanic activity and how this relates to the formation of rocks. This will be helpful for Year 3's continuation of the rocks topic next year!

Our Geography project is continuing as we look Beyond the Magic Kingdom. We have studied more interesting areas of Florida, a fascinating state with many unusual features. We have been particularly struck by the dangers faced by the sea turtles and designed a bumper sticker campaign to help raise awareness of how humans can be their unwitting enemy!

In Computing, we have brought together many of our desktop publishing skills to produce copies of our poems and posters for clubs. We are also using 2email on Purple Mash and we are hoping to produce our persuasive letters in email form.



In Art, we have been looking at the work of Rosalind Monks. She creates intricate and detailed images of wildlife. It's a slow process, but the effect is worth it!



We have had a lovely session in Forest School this half term, learning how to tie knots and use natural resources to make party decorations. We have also had some serious rivalry over dens!

In PSHE, our Jigsaw topic has been "Dreams and Goals". We've thought about our own dreams and goals and what we would need to do to achieve them. We've also thought about how some people face additional challenges in their lives, so we have been designing a lovely garden with people in mind who can enjoy them safely.

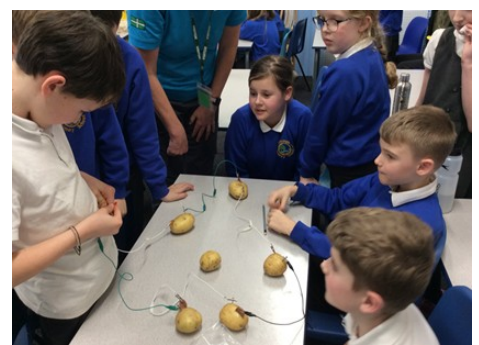


## Beech Class

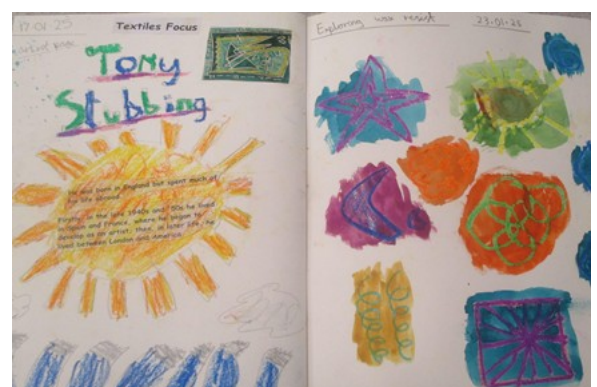
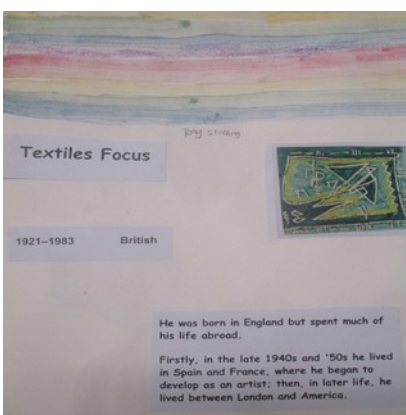
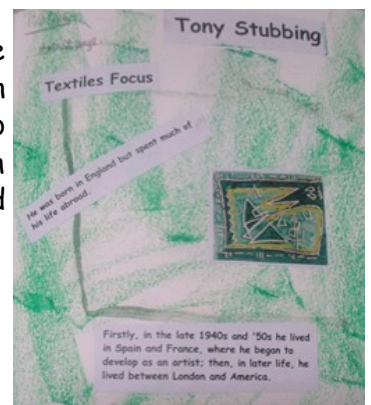
In Science, we've been taking the opportunity to investigate our own scientific questions. We've been thinking about how electricity can be described as flowing when there is a closed circuit. The pupils have been brilliant at troubleshooting circuit issues and checking each component carefully.

To finish the unit we had a visit from Devon Waste to look at where the different components of batteries come from and consider how important recycling is. Did you know that in Devon there is now no Landfill?

We made our own batteries using potatoes as the electrolyte. We found that you needed at least two potatoes to power each LED light or clock but only one to power a calculator.



In our textiles artwork in art this half term, we have been studying the lines and abstract shapes used by artist Tony Stubbing. We have been learning how we can use a 'wax resist' method on paper and on fabric to create interesting and striking designs. We have been experimenting with colour combinations, before going on to make our final pieces and embellish them.



## Beech Class continued

During our recent poetry unit, we have spent some time learning and remembering verses of the Beachcomber poem. We linked gestures or props to some of the words and phrases used by the poet to help them to stick in our minds. We kept reading over parts of the poem so we remembered them better. Many of us performed the part we had practised and spoke with great expression.



In French lessons, we've been learning how to ask what the time is - 'Quelle heure a t'il?' Then we practised responses, such as 'Il est dix heures.' This has given us some more opportunities to practise reading the clock, which is a great life skill, and something we can keep working on both at home and at school.

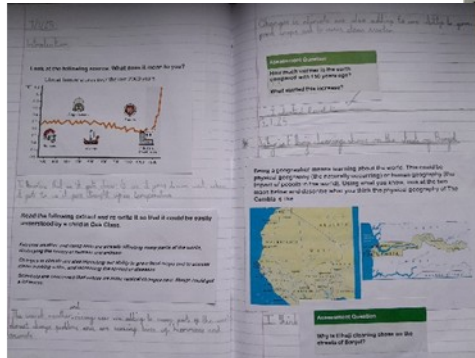
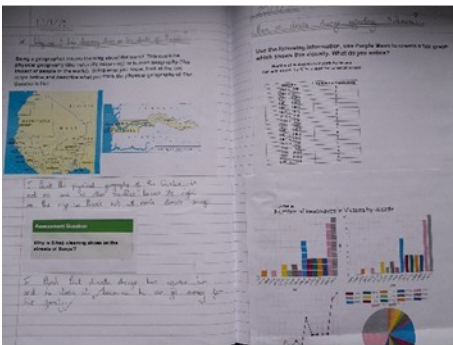
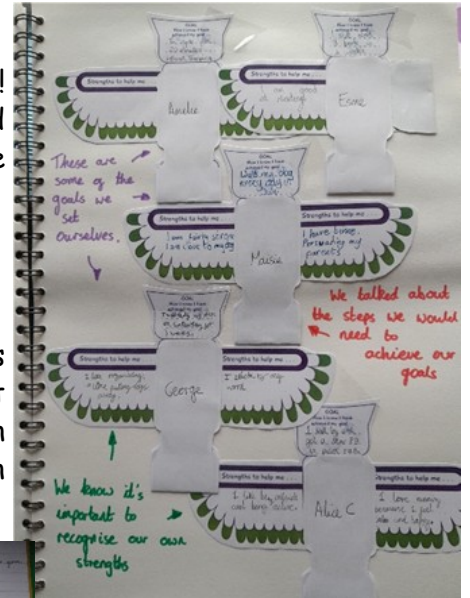




## Willow Class

It's been a brilliant start to the new calendar year in Willow Class! In our **Jigsaw** lessons we have been thinking about goal setting and how to take manageable steps towards meeting these targets. We had a wide range of ideas, from tidying bedrooms to Park Run PBs!

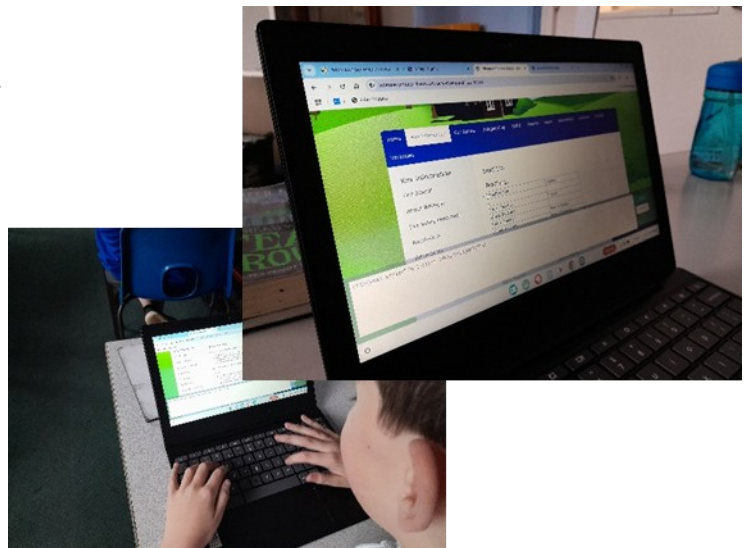
Our **geography** topic this term is climate change and how this affects the world around us. We have been learning about forest fires in Australia, desertification in parts of Africa and flooding in the UK. We have noticed some interesting political viewpoints on this too!



As part of our topic, we were delighted to have a **visitor** come and talk to us about the impact of marine waste on the world. We were shocked to hear that approximately one bin lorry's worth of plastic enters the seas around the world every minute!

We've had lots of fun recently **writing** with the book *The Day the Crayons Quit* and have been writing letters in a similar style. Our **reading journey** has also continued and we are now half way through *The Night Bus Hero* - another fabulous novel.

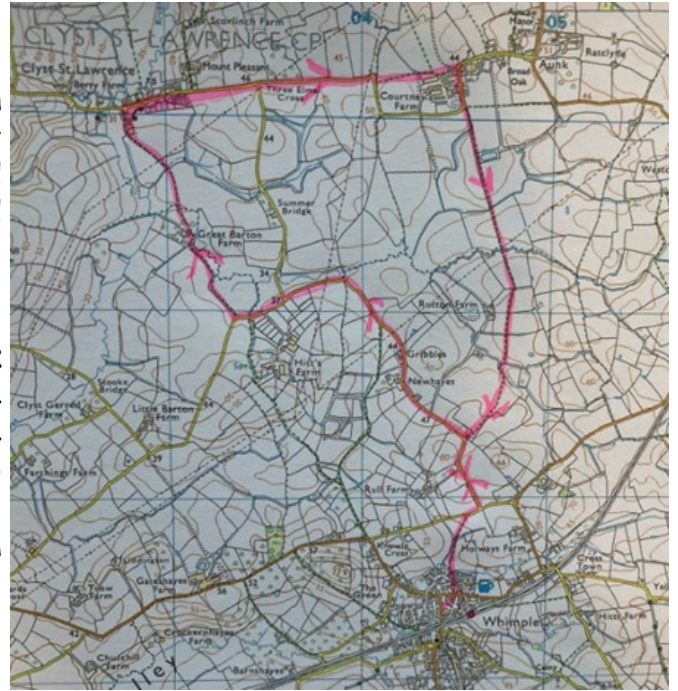
We have also been practising our **dance** showdown routine, building websites in **computing** and thinking hard about problem solving in **maths** too - phew - a busy term!



## Outdoor Education

As part of our school's outdoor learning, children in Years Five and Six took part in an 8.5km walk last week. We wrapped up warm and braved the cold before setting off to explore the footpaths and roads around Whimble.

Before leaving, we found out how to read and mark 6 figure grid references, and how to recognise landmarks both on a map, and on the route. We learned how useful the electricity wires are to knowing where we are in this part of the world! A big thank you to Mrs Van Montfoort from Silverton school for organising this on our behalf.



All of the adults were very impressed with how we coped with the cold, wet and mud and worked together to support each other to the end.

Following this, 12 children in Year 6 have expressed their interest in the 16 mile Exmoor Challenge later in the year... watch this space!



## School Wassail

On Friday 24th January, the children in Beech and Willow Classes took part in the annual school wassail. Led by Mrs Emma Palmer and accompanied by Mr Jim Causely, the children paraded over to the school orchard. Once there, everyone circles the apple trees. The royalty recite a rhyme whilst pieces of toast are placed in the branches to entice robins, believed to be the guardians of the orchard. Rotten apples are thrown at the tree whilst pots and pans are clattered to ward off any evil spirits and wake the trees from their winter slumber, encouraging a good harvest for the year. Well done to Eleanor and Ava for being the royalty at our wassail as well as the village event earlier in January.



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