

Hilltop Primary Academy

Curriculum Newsletter

April 2021



Welcome to our second curriculum newsletter in this academic year, sharing some of the activities we have completed during terms 3 and 4 linked to our topics. Each year group from years 1 to 6 had a key question relating to their topic to focus their learning.

Obviously, we are still in the situation where trips out and visitors into school are restricted. However, some of the children have had the opportunity to experience virtual visitors in their classrooms.

We continue to look forward to some exciting new topics and hopefully very soon, the reintroduction of trips/visitors for our WOW events in terms 5 and 6. Keep your eyes open for the photos on social media.

Happy Easter to you all.

Miss Wooder (Assistant Headteacher and Curriculum Lead)

Year R

The children have enjoyed seeing their friends and teachers again. We have enjoyed exploring the newly developed outside area that encourages the children to be curious and independent, developing long lasting friendships and links to adult led learning. We have been inspired to explore the outside area using Percy Park Keeper stories and Winnie the Pooh short stories. Children have role played the characters as well as using their imagination to take their learning to the next step, for example, making a habitat for the animals in the story of Percy the Park Keeper in our Den area, making cakes for Winnie the Pooh in our mud kitchen and digging tunnels to link different animal habitats together and performing shows on our stage to friends.

We have enjoyed strengthening our fine and gross motor skills all in the hall making large and small marks to music on large paper every Friday as well as using screwdrivers and spanners in our workshop fixing real life objects.

The children have shown great motivation and independence in their learning and we look forward to encouraging the children develop further into independent curious learners.



Year 1

Key question: Why doesn't a polar bear live in Strood?

It was all about the paws and claws in Year One this term.

We travelled back in time to the time of the dinosaurs and investigated the types of creatures that would have been alive then. We made factfiles, our own junk model dinosaurs, learnt about Mary Anning, fossils and even had a Dino day.

We continued with our animal theme to investigate different classifications of animals moving onto investigating their natural habitats. We looked at maps of the world and the oceans before wondering why different animals were suited to different habitats. We ended the term making our own habitat boxes.



Away from the animals we have been thinking about keeping safe, the environment, Jesus being a good friend and the Easter story.

Year 2

Key question: What will we find beyond our shores?



In Year 2 through terms 3 and 4 we have focused on many exciting things.

To start off, in Numeracy we focused on multiplication and division. We will also recently have been looking at 2D and 3D shapes, which the children loved and have started our learning on fractions.

In science the children have had a wonderful time looking at forces and more recently been exploring and comparing living things, food chains and habitats.

History, we all learnt some fascinating facts about space and different astronauts.

The children have had different literacy skills across the two terms thinking about listening and writing, sequencing and poetry. I think we have some poets in the making.

The children have also had opportunities for research projects.

We have been really excited about Art and have thought about linking art to the topic of aliens, space and under the sea.

They have been creating their own paintings and art pieces using different mediums.

In PSHE, we have been thinking about our community and where we belong. We have discussed different groups that we belong to and the children have thought about how we should accept and be thoughtful of each other's differences.

Finally, in R.E our focus has been Judaism thinking about the festival of Passover and what their views of the story is as well as more recently thinking about Christianity and the Easter festival.

Year 3

Key question: Where would an ideal location be to be a Stone Age settlement in our local area?

In terms 3 and 4, Turtles and Panda class' topic was 'Tribal Tales'. We learned about The Stone Age and what life was like to live in those times, compared with now. During our lockdown learning, we made our own Stone Age camps using natural materials, In school, we designed, made and evaluated our own Stone Age jewellery out of clay and salt dough. We are really looking forward to our Stone Age virtual session with **Memma The Cavewoman**, in the last week of term 4, who will be showing us her real-life Stone Age camp, Stone Age tools and jewellery.

The main question we used as a stimulus was 'Where would an ideal location be to be a Stone Age settlement in our local area?' As we were not in school due to a National Lockdown, this limited the work we could do linked to our local area however we worked hard to consider the different kinds of settlements that were around in Stone Age times.

As part of our Literacy learning, we have read lots of different books including The Stone Age Boy, Terry Deary's Stone Age tales and How to Wash a Woolly Mammoth where we wrote a set of instructions of our own. We also made our own fact files linked to different Stone Age animals, describing their different characteristics.

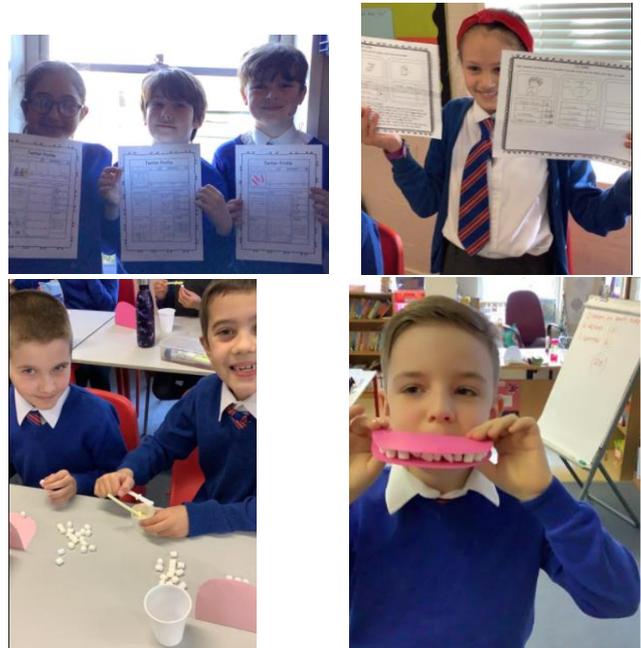
The RECIPE value we considered during this topic was Enjoyment with the character skill of communication. Despite the difficult circumstances we have been under, every day all of Year 3 showed amazing enjoyment engaging thoroughly with their online live lessons. They also used effective communication to explain their ideas to others whilst working over TEAMS.

Year 4

Key question: What happens to our food when we eat?

Year 4 have been reading Mr Stink to go alongside our topic of Burps, Bottoms and Bile. We had fun creating Top Trump cards and Twitter profiles for the book's characters. Owls and Eagles also had a great time deciding what they would do if they had Mr Stink's power of stinkiness!

In Science, we made mouths from card and used mini marshmallows to show our teeth ... we didn't eat any of the marshmallows, honestly!



Year 5

Our key question was: What impact can we have on climate change?

The RECIPE value we focused on during our project was 'Perseverance' and our character skill was 'Problem-solving'.

During our topic, we have learned about the importance of the Amazon rainforest. We have studied the different animals who live in this habitat and spent time researching the Yanomami tribe and their lifestyle. We now realise how important the rainforests are, as the trees supply 20% of the oxygen we need to breathe and there are plant species growing in the rainforests which are vital for medicines.

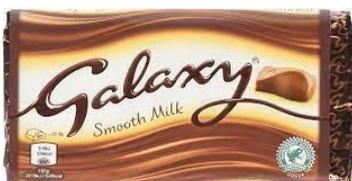
Zoolab paid a virtual visit to us and introduced us to a range of rainforest creatures. We met a treefrog, tarantula and royal python, plus some others. We loved learning all the new facts. After this session, we created fact files about the creatures and wrote poems about them.



A major focus, on our return to school, was a project on palm oil and its impact on rainforests around the world. We learned about 'deforestation' and the impact it has on the animals and tribes we had previously studied. We wrote scripts for a 'Newsround' style news report on palm oil and then videoed ourselves presenting our reports in a mock studio setting.

In pairs, we wrote story books, aimed at Year R children. These stories explained what we could do to help stop deforestation and explained the different everyday items where palm oil is used.

We learned to 'Follow the frog' as part of the Rainforest Alliance, to ensure we are buying products which do not have a harmful impact on the rainforests.



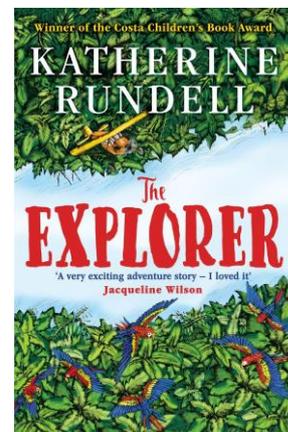
In DT we have been designing and constructing rainforest animal sculptures from recycled materials. We have used glue guns, scissors, and different joining methods.



We hope to display our sculptures for others to see as soon as we can.



In Literacy, the main text we have been studying has been 'The Explorer' by Katherine Rundell. We have really enjoyed reading this book, which is set in the Amazon rainforest, and predicting what we think will happen next.



Year 6

Key question - How does our past shape our future?

Year 6 started back at school with the theme Dig for Victory! The children had fun planting seeds to grow vegetables as people would have done in World War II. We planned allotments and set out what we would plant and where would be best to grow different plants, this linked to talking about rationing. We produced our own propaganda posters for Dig for Victory and then researched recipes from the War which used some unusual ingredients as the usual ones were difficult to get hold of. The children made carrot cookies - a Wartime favourite, and decided they really liked them - many of the children even asked for the recipe!

The children also enjoyed making their own Anderson shelters for which they had to make a permanent-join frame for a base before completing the outside.

This was a great project that the children really enjoyed, and it brought in all the RECIPE values too.



