

Year 6 Curriculum Overview

Spring Term

In the Beginning



This leaflet aims to give you information on the curriculum the children will be covering during the Spring term.

English

As readers, they will continue to develop their reading fluency and strengthen their vocabulary skills by using contextual clues and working with dictionaries and thesauruses.

In guided reading lessons, they will be exposed to a wide range of texts, including fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction, and reference books. Where possible, they will make cross-curricular links to deepen their understanding.

This term, they will enjoy a rich variety of books during our daily read-aloud sessions, helping to foster a love of reading and broaden their experience of different genres and styles. They will listen to:

- ✓ Classic: 'Sherlock Holmes and The Adventure of the Speckled Band' by Arthur Conan Doyle; The Signalman by Charles Dickens and 'The Canterville Ghost' by Oscar Wilde
- ✓ Modern Fiction: 'Troop Friend' by Kirsty Applebaum
- ✓ Adventure/fantasy: 'The Dark is Rising' by Susan Cooper and 'Darwin's Dragons' by Lindsay Galvin
- ✓ Reference: 'Charles Darwin's On the Origin of Species' by Sabina Radeva

We return with a focus on writing for the web linking to our digital literacy topics in PSHE and computing. This allows children to experience new styles of writing and to read in different ways, particularly exploring the persuasive features and tight control of tense and punctuation used in 'clickbait' articles.

They will manipulate language to persuade and hook readers in – and, in the process, learn to be a lot more canny about such manipulation techniques as they browse the web themselves! They will read a number of texts linked to our science objectives including extracts from a natural history book The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs, a graphic novel interpretation of Charles Darwin's On the Origin of Species as well as news articles and fiction.

Then it is time to turn our attention to exploring character flaws in our narrative storytelling. They will be reading a number of short stories across the year including The Adventure of the Speckled Band by Arthur Conan Doyle, The Signalman by Charles Dickens, The Canterville Ghost by Oscar Wilde and others to build the children's appetite for building atmosphere and generating suspense. They will compare archaic and modern features of stories so they can write in different roles but also approach reading more complex, older texts with greater confidence. They will explore different techniques for using imagery and theme, the use of irony and the children will practise using dialogue accurately in their own compositions both to move the story forward and to demonstrate characterisation.

Additionally, they will continue to progress through their spelling and grammar curriculum linked to the homework schedule and will have opportunities to practise test skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling as well as reading in preparation for their May tests. They will continue to build their stamina for writing at length in anticipation of secondary school.

Maths

The children now have learned most of the core arithmetic skills for year 6 and so the spring term is about consolidating these key skills to ensure they are fast and fluent while applying them broadly in the extended maths curriculum.

Throughout Spring Term, learners will continue to build upon their existing knowledge of: multiplication and division; area, perimeter, position and direction; fractions and percentages. They will also further develop their understanding of statistics through cross-curricular activities.

As ever, they will experience a progression from concrete resources such as fraction cubes through to pictorial representations such as bar models and puzzles and ultimately to abstract questions and open-ended problems including multi-step problems. They will practise methods to estimate and check their work and gauge whether or not their choices were effective. They will learn to reason using an answer-prove-explain model, using precise mathematical vocabulary and applying computational thinking and systematic working skills to more complex problems.

Science

A new year means a fresh start... but we are going to start this year by looking at the original fresh start as we track the origins of life from the Big Bang through to the formation of the Earth, the primordial soup that gave rise to life as we know it and beyond. They will look at the fossil evidence that allows us to trace the evolution of life on Earth from the dinosaurs to the present day and come to understand how variation and adaptation play a key role in the biodiversity of today. Linked to our studies of different biomes and the Galapagos in geography and sketching in art, they will explore how evolution works and track the history of one of the great minds who pioneered it, Charles Darwin, as well as learning about other key figures such as pioneering local palaeontologist Mary Anning.

Light is also a key theme from the beginning of time. They will look at use of light and shade artistically, in the context of computing but also study its properties scientifically, understanding how the eye interprets it, how it appears to travel in straight lines. Using this idea, they will explain shadows and their shapes before applying these principles both to their own artwork and to their scientific investigations.

Working scientifically is a huge part of their studies of light. The children will investigate a range of scenarios, working scientifically by controlling variables, recoding results accurately and applying their measurement and statistical analysis skills from maths. They will encounter a range of different presentations of data and be required to draw conclusions, present findings and gauge the degree of trust that different findings can present. Through their studies of Darwin, they will learn the controversies that can surround scientific inquiry and so learn to identify the specific evidence that is used to back up theories, including studying some examples of evolution still in action today.

Geography

Geography is a key focus this term and will be the thread running through our science studies and our computing work. They will explore how biomes work and study different biomes and ecosystems around the world as well as broadening our map skills, both digital and regional maps, working at different scales for different reasons.

A particular focus will be on the Galapagos Islands, an archipelago of huge significance because it was the inspiration for so much of Charles Darwin's evolutionary theories but today is a fascinating case study in the benefits and dangers of eco-tourism. This gives us the opportunity to analyse data, review information and consider the status of the Galapagos both in relation to British geography and in the context of the South American continent.

Art, Design & Technology

As artists, they will focus on drawing and portraiture, inspired by the work of illustrator and author Shaun Tan. They will study his unique style and explore how he uses line, tone and texture to convey character and emotion. They will develop their own drawing techniques through observation and practice, culminating in creating expressive portraits that reflect Shaun Tan's imaginative approach while showcasing their individual creativity.

Linked to their computing work, they will use computer aided design (CAD) to develop an appealing toy. They will consider how different toys are designed, speak to a working designer and create scale drawings before using the computer to create their model and 3D print it.

Computing

As computer experts, Year 6 will build on their digital skills through three exciting units:

✓ Creating Media: Web Page Creation

Children will learn how websites are structured and designed. They will create their own web pages, exploring layout, navigation, and the use of text and images to communicate effectively. They will also consider the importance of clear design and accessibility.

✓ Programming A: Variables in Games

They will develop their coding skills by creating simple games that use variables to store and update information. They will learn how variables can control elements such as scores, timers, and character movements, gaining a deeper understanding of how games work behind the scenes.

✓ Creating Media: 3D Modelling (STEM Week)

During STEM Week, children will explore 3D modelling software to design and create digital objects. They will learn how 3D models are used in real-world contexts such as architecture, engineering and game design, developing both technical and creative skills.

By the end of the term, they will have strengthened their understanding of programming, web design and digital creativity, preparing them for more advanced computing challenges.

Physical Education

This term the children will be looking at Gymnastics, Dance and Outdoor Adventurous Activities. In gymnastics they will be focusing on shapes, rolls, balances and jumps. They will learn the correct techniques and how to perform these safely both on the floor and on the gymnastics equipment. They will also be looking to create mini routines to show what they have learnt and their understanding. They will be encouraged to develop their routines based on previous knowledge and knowledge they may have from outside of school clubs.

In dance they will be looking to follow a set routine using three different dance genres. They will then begin to choreograph their own routines in small groups using one or all of the genres they have learnt. They will also be encouraged to use movements inspired by other genres.

In OAA they will further develop their map reading skills, orienteering and team work. They will continue to develop the skills they need to be a good leader and a good team member.

Music

As musicians, Year 6 will explore how music can create effects and moods. They will develop improvisation skills, experimenting with vocal timbre, dynamics, pitch, tempo, and articulation to achieve different musical expressions. Through tuned percussion activities, they will learn about intervals and discover how consonant and dissonant harmonies can shape atmosphere.

They will also investigate how composers communicate character, setting, and mood, studying techniques such as leitmotifs used by film composer John Williams. They will learn about the key features of musical theatre, exploring the roles of actors, musicians, and audience. Working in small groups, they will interpret song lyrics creatively, adding dynamics, vocal colour, facial expression, and movement.

In addition, they will use Soundtrap for Education to compose their own four-chord song. This will include adding a drum beat, bass line, chords, and arpeggios, before creating a melody using the pentatonic scale. They will learn to use the quantise function to keep their music in time, experiment with tempo and dynamics, and finish by adding a vocal track.

Religious Education

As thinkers, they will explore two important worldviews: Christianity and Humanism.

In our Christianity unit, they will consider the question: What do Christians believe about Salvation? They will learn how Christians understand the significance of Jesus' death and resurrection, and how these beliefs link to Easter celebrations. Children will reflect on how ideas of forgiveness and hope influence Christian life and worship.

In our Humanism unit, they will explore What matters most? and How do humanists live? They will learn that Humanists do not follow a religion but base their values on reason, empathy, and respect for others. They will discuss how Humanists make moral decisions and live meaningful lives without belief in a god. Through discussion and reflection, they will compare these worldviews, considering similarities and differences in beliefs, values and ways of living.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

In PSHE lessons, they will be focusing on our school values of Respect and Forgiveness. During PSHE sessions they will cover the following topics: Why does Money Matter? Being Safe and Online Safety and Awareness.

During Safety Week, they will learn how to stay safe in a variety of situations, both in the real world and online. Under the umbrellas of 'Being Safe' and 'Online Safety and Awareness', they will explore important themes to help them make sensible choices and manage risks.

Topics include:

- ✓ Water Safety: What are rip currents and how can you stay safe if caught in one?
- ✓ What are drugs, why can some be harmful, and how can we say no?
- ✓ Managing Risks and Hazards: To learn how to assess hazards and manage risks independently.
- ✓ Safe Relationships – understanding the importance of boundaries and safe touch.

They will also take part in online safety activities, focusing on how to build positive online relationships, manage information responsibly, building a positive online reputation and how to protect their self-image and identity.

French

This term, they will apply all our learning as we find out about France and what it is like to join in with their celebrations of Épiphanie - La Fête des Rois, Mardi Gras and Easter.

They will examine similarities and differences as they will build on prior knowledge to explore a range of language structures to use our speaking, listening, reading, writing and grammar skills. They will focus on geography of France and the wider world.

Homework

The schedule of homework for the term is available on the year 6 section of the website and lists the due dates for the children's weekly English, maths, spelling and knowledge homework as well as their fortnightly times table homework and their half-termly homework from a menu of options.

The English and maths homework will usually involve pages from their CGP books while the knowledge gives them the opportunity to build their self-questioning and revision skills by creating ten questions from a page of information relevant to our topics: they will choose one of their sets of questions to quiz the class.

Additionally and crucially, children should continue to read at least half an hour a night and record their reading in their homework diaries. Recommended books are on the website.