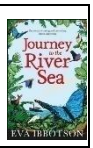
Class 5's Programme of Work for Spring Terms 2020

Term 3: 7th January – 14th February inclusive

Term 4: 24th February - 3rd April inclusive



Our theme for both terms is 'The Americas', and where appropriate, subjects will be linked with it.

English

Our class novel is the award-winning adventure story Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson; it is set mainly in Brazil just over 100 years ago. In addition, we shall be close reading a wide range of texts encompassing many genres but all linked with our over-riding theme: The Americas. These include poetry by Maya Angelou and a broad range of non-fiction. I am particularly looking forward to sharing some real-life survival stories which I am sure will inspire wonderful writing. Two of the longer writing foci will be newspaper reports and dual narratives as well as shorter writes linked to the wider curriculum.

We shall be continuing to develop our grammar and punctuation knowledge and put them into practice through our writing. I appreciate that the grammar terminology can seem like a foreign language and am always happy to explain anything; in addition, there are several websites that offer support – one to try for all areas of the National Curriculum is 'The School Run' (https://www.theschoolrun.com/ using its free resources).

For spellings, we shall maintain the weekly spelling lessons to help everyone understand the rules that underpin many spellings as well as covering exception words, as with grammar and punctuation, the most important aspect is to transfer the knowledge of rules to spellings when writing.

Finally, we have had wonderful writing opportunity to launch the term in the form of penfriends from a school in Chicago. We have responded to their letters with enthusiasm and, for many, it will hopefully be the start of a long-term correspondence. In addition, it is supporting our appreciation of cultural similarities and differences and stimulate discussion.

Mathematics

We started the term studying prime and composite numbers followed by squared and cubed numbers. We shall spend most of the term studying fractions, decimals and percentages. These aspects of mathematics draw together many areas of arithmetic and having times table knowledge that is automatic is essential if children are to be able to focus on the key learning point rather than getting 'bogged down' in pre-requisite skills – please do help your child if their times table and division facts are not tip top and they cannot recall the facts speedily when randomly asked. Adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing fractions involves multiple steps and understandably many children can find this learning challenging; however, we shall build up skills step-by-step and always start with concrete understandings. When supporting your child, always ask them to explain how they do it at school, this will often clarify their thinking and enable them to achieve independently and if they do need help, it will prevent confusion through encountering a different approach. Again, I am really happy to help - please do ask. Historically, maths was often taught with the focus on procedures but now there is an emphasis on developing understandings. As an example, historically children were taught to move the decimal point when multiplying and dividing but now children are taught to understand that the decimal point never moves; rather, a digit's value changes as it moves to the right or left according to whether it is being divided or multiplied.

Statistics and data analysis will be covered purposefully in geography and the properties of 2D shapes in computing; indeed, if my skills stretch far enough, I would like to cover drawing American animals' outlines through co-ordinates in all 4 quadrants – no promises!

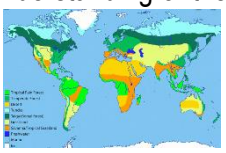
Science

Our first topic of the term is electricity and we shall recap and then build upon previous learning. We shall be building series circuits and learning the recognised symbols for the different electrical components before conducting a series of investigations and experiments to understand the relationship between voltage and the performance of a variety of components such as a buzzer or a lightbulb.

Our second topic will be closely linked to our Americas' theme; we shall be learning about evolution and inheritance, recognising that living things have changed over time and that fossils provide information about living things that inhabited the Earth millions of years ago. We shall focus on one or two animal species from North and South America. It is a wonderful opportunity to link Charles Darwin's work on the origin of the species and his observations during his time on the Galapagos Islands with how a species can change over time and adapt to specific environments. Much closer to home, we shall be looking at personally inherited traits and features.

Geography (History)

Geography will form the lynchpin subject for learning about North and South America. Initially we shall be studying which countries are in North and South America before moving on to our main geographical focus: biomes and vegetation belts. We shall be learning about the 7 land biomes of the Americas and develop an understanding of the factors that cause areas to have differences. As part of this, we shall be focusing on 7 particular locations and comparing data such as latitude and longitude, hours of daylight, temperatures and precipitation. All of the information will be compared to Blockley's and we shall make use of the data provided by our own weather station. Expanding on biomes, we shall learn about vegetation belts and focus our learning on to the Rocky Mountains to understand the effect of altitude on what grows and therefore what animals the vegetation supports.



Linked to climate change, we shall be researching the problem of desertification in North and South America and the melting ice sheets in Greenland to understanding how human activity is impacting on biomes and vegetation belts

Linking human geography with history, we shall be finding out about how the Americas were 'discovered' with a focus on two specific explorers: Leif Erikson and Christopher Columbus. The history of Native Americans will be woven into this work and given prominence through the arts as well as hopefully through a trip to The American Museum, Bath.

Art & Design and Design Technology

In art and design technology, we are using the Native American traditions as our inspiration. We shall be designing and making totem poles and dream catchers – if anyone acquires the inner tubes of carpet rolls, that would be wonderful. (Hopefully we shall be using co-ordinates to draw bison or wolves!) Also, our computer programming will be producing some stunning patterns.

Music

Again, after learning about the 7 key musical elements, we shall be learning to play a song inspired by the bison and then compose our own pieces using multiple elements and inspirations from Native American culture.

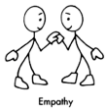
Religious Education

Firstly, we shall be addressing the question: "What does it mean to be a Muslim in Britain today?" Although Britain today is a multi-cultural society, it is often easy to lose sight of that in our rural location; this first topic of the year will help children to have a better understanding of the diversity within our county and country.

✝ After half term, we shall return to Christianity and investigate what it means if God is holy and loving by weighing up how biblical ideas and teachings about God as holy and loving might make a difference in the world today, with the children developing insights of their own.

PSHE

This is always ongoing and is often in response to needs as they arise; however, the two key themes for the spring terms are Health and Wellbeing (within which we shall be discussing growing and changing, and keeping safe) and Relationships (focusing on feelings and emotions, and valuing differences).



Computing

E-safety will continually feature in our computing work. We are going to link the properties of 2D shapes with programming and write algorithms to draw increasingly complex shapes. We shall develop our programming skills by learning how to write algorithms using the most efficient coding possible. Once we have these skills, we can start to be incredibly creative and create repeated patterns that resemble spirograph designs.

French

Our first unit of work is based around hobbies and moves on to music and musical instruments and weekends. After half term, we shall be moving on to learn vocabulary and phrases surrounding school trips.

P.E.

In PE this term, we shall be focusing on the children's skills learnt throughout school and covering a range of sports. We shall use tennis as a tool to improve our striking skills, the children will be expected to be able to hit the ball consistently in a rally using both forehand and backhand. The children will be expected to apply their invasion games tactical knowledge in the selected sports of netball, dodgeball, football and tag rugby this term.

Homework: Thank you for your continued support. If your child needs help they can see me on a Friday or Monday lunchtime.

Finally

If you have an area of expertise linked to our learning and would like to share it, please do speak to me, I shall welcome your offers.

Good communication between home and school is so important, please 'catch me' or make an appointment to see me if you have an area of concern rather than wait for parents' evening on the 10th and 11th of February.