



Dear Parents and Carers,

It seems to have been an even busier start to a half term than usual; even for Summercroft standards! Families who have been with us a while will have noticed the subtle change from Art to Arts Week this academic year. Pupil feedback last year requested more art, drama and music in the curriculum and it was felt this could be a good way to up the ante! Mrs Richardson led the staff in exploring rhythms and dance moves—we had an enormous amount of fun. Judging by the majority of feedback, the children really enjoyed the week too. I should like to pay tribute to the staff for their energy and enthusiasm throughout the week. This is, of course, in addition to the hours they are spending preparing written reports to be shared at the end of this term. They are absolute troopers! Even the rain at the beginning of the week, whilst walking to the cinema, didn't dampen their spirits!

## World Book Day

I know that some of you may have groaned (inwardly) at the thought of *another* dress up day but what a great turn out it was in spite of the appearance of snow on Wednesday/Thursday! It was great to work out which favourite characters were represented across both buildings and I know how much the staff enjoy this occasion, too. There is always a healthy, competitive edge in the staffrooms to see who has the most elaborate costume! Children's prizes were awarded to EYFS, KS1, Lower KS2 and Upper KS2. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to everyone who joined in the fun of the day.

## Thank you

A big thank you to Mr Gill for helping Mr Jenkins clear the snow from the paths around our school on these bitterly cold mornings.

Have a pleasant weekend,  
Carole Hintridge  
Headteacher

## Dia de los Muertos

Year 5

Across the school this half term started with Arts Week and Dia de los Muertos. In Year 5 we got our hands (as well as our tables, chairs, hair, clothes and floor) dirty as we used scrunched up newspaper and Modroc to create our 'bigger than me art' – a two metre tall skeleton for both classes. We decorated these with the colourful patterns associated with Dia de los Muertos. We also carefully crafted paper plate masks with a calavera design and hung our beautiful papel picado banners around the edge of the hall. Other areas of the arts were also explored, with excellent dances to Mariachi music created as a whole class and musical instruments used to create a beat themed around Mexican style music. Both of these were performed to the rest of KS2 to finish off a wonderful week.





**A Mexican Fiesta!**

**Nursery**

Last week Nursery joined in with the whole school Arts Week celebration of Dia De Los Muertos. We had such a busy week and enjoyed learning all about the cultural traditions.

During the week we made our own instruments and decorated them with bright colours. We then used the instruments to explore how we can make loud and quiet noises and copied different repeating rhythms. The children even had a challenge of making up their own rhythm for the class to copy!

We also looked carefully at sugar skulls and the different ways they were decorated. We then made paper plate mask and decorated our own sugar skulls using paint and cotton buds to add patterns. We made our own mini skeletons using art straws and then worked together as a team to make a class 'larger than me' skeleton! It was a very messy job as we used Modrock to create the body, head, arms and legs!

Each day we learnt and practiced the 'Mexican Hat Dance'. We followed the instructions and listened carefully to the beat of the music to try and stay in time! It was a tricky dance to learn but so much fun!

On Thursday we enjoyed opening the classroom doors and showing all of the parents our creations from the week!



**Creative Fun**

**Year 2**

Last week we enjoyed being creative during Summercroft's Arts Week, inspired by the Mexican festival Dia de los Muertos. All of our learning during the week encompassed Mexican culture.

In dance, we had fun learning some of the dance moves for a traditional Mexican hat dance. We then performed our dance in our end of week showcase. In art, we made a life size skeleton (Calacas) and skull masks. We also learnt how to block print, and created amazing skull pictures.

We were excited to receive some help with our artwork, when Mrs Jackson, who is a Birchwood art teacher (and a parent), brought some of her students to show us how to make tissue paper marigolds. The children thoroughly enjoyed working with the Birchwood students and created some superb flowers!

What a fantastic week!



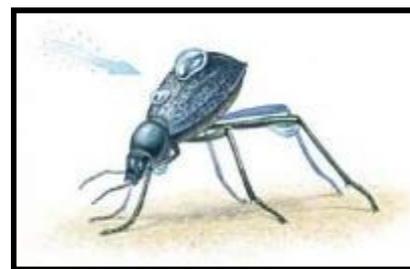
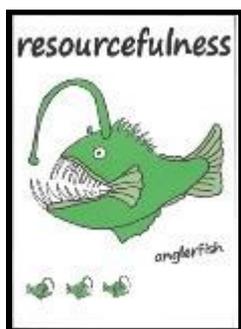


**Being Resourceful**

**Mr Jess**

February assemblies have focussed on being resourceful and this couldn't have been more evident than in Arts Week. The teachers all modelled how resourceful they are through the exciting learning opportunities and activities they planned for the children throughout the week. It was amazing to see just how much work had been produced by the end of the week using a range of different resources. The children, of course, used their own resourcefulness throughout the week too; creating skeletons using different materials, composing rhythms using a range of different percussion instruments and through the costumes they wore on the final day. They all looked fantastic! While a lot of our learning powers were used throughout the week, resourcefulness definitely shone through.

In talking groups, the children have also been discussing how they can be resourceful in school and how it is important to choose and use the correct resources appropriately to support them with their learning. They discussed how we can learn a lot from nature and looked at how plants and insects can be much more resourceful than we are. The children then discussed what we can learn from their resourcefulness and how we can apply it to our own lives.



**Art Week Fun**

**Reception**

For Arts Week we celebrated, Dia De Los Muertos, the Mexican Celebration of our ancestors. We read 'Funnybones' and had a little look at what is inside our bodies before making our own skeletons using art straws. We also made musical shakers, brightly coloured headbands, skeleton masks and decorated skeleton cookies. We ended our week with a fabulous dress-up day where we had a parade with the rest of the school to see all of their wonderful costumes and whole-class skeletons that they had made! What an exciting, craft-filled week!





**Semana de las Artes en el Año 1**

**Year 1**

Year 1 excelled themselves with enthusiasm over Arts Week. The children fully immersed themselves in the topic of Dia de los Muertos. We started off by designing and making a skeleton mask using lots of bright colours and patterns. The following day we undertook the task of making skeleton cookies - this required the children to use their measuring skills to weigh out the ingredients needed. Even though they didn't all resemble a figure they tasted great! We continued the week with making papel picado, collage skeletons and making a skeleton larger than the teachers. The week culminated in a fantastic parade and show case where we showed off our costumes and performed a Mexican dance.

At the beginning of this week the children were shocked to discover an intruder had broken into the classroom and left a mess. As detectives the children had to look for clues to solve the mystery of the identity of the intruder..... to be continued!!!!





**A Week of Fun!**

**Year 6**

On Friday 23rd February, Summernoteft celebrated the end of our Arts with a Mexican fiesta. During the week, Year 6 created many pieces of artwork including: a giant skeleton, clay skulls, papel picardo (a traditional Mexican bunting) and an inspired piece of writing. The children used collaboration to build the wondrous pieces of work that were produced. Also Year 6 created an orchestra-style percussion song that amazed many of the other children. To finish the celebrations, pupils of the school dressed in bright and vibrant colours and paraded them around the school. Every year performed a song and dance routine to get everyone in the Dia de los Muertos spirit.

Alexis and Annie



**Year 6 at the O2**

On the 6th February, Year 6 took a trip to the O2 to join the Young Voices Choir. We left at 12:00 and started our journey to London. Our adventure began here. We arrived at the O2 at 12:45 and met our conductor and the rest of the choir. We began practising our favourite songs. The Urban Striders and our choreographer Andy, walked out onto the stage to help us with our dance moves. They also showed us some of their awesome moves.

After practising for a couple of hours we were allowed to start eating our tea. We went out into the hallway which was crammed with ecstatic singers. After finishing our tea we filed back into the arena ready to perform to our parents. We waited for an hour as our excited parents filled the arena. The performance started and the lights went out. Everywhere around us were pinpricks of light as the 7,981 choir members swayed their torches to the music. Halfway through the exhilarating night, one of the organisers announced that the entire Young Voices event was to raise money for two lifesaving charities, Food for All and Teenage Cancer Trust. As the night drew to a close, the amazing experience ended with an unforgettable lightshow.

Riding home on the coach, we all chatted about the wonderful happenings that we had been part of. Even though it was late we were all wide awake from the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that we had just taken part in. Thank you to Mr and Mrs Gapper for accompanying us.





**Culture from Two Continents!**

**Year 4**

The first continent we visited for a week of culture was South America. We learnt about Dia de los Muertos and how Mexicans celebrate the lives of their ancestors with a very special day each year in November. We created our own dance, composed a piece of music, sewed felt skulls and created a 'bigger than me' skeleton. We were very pleased with the outcomes and in particular very proud of our felt skulls; most of us learnt how to sew a blanket stitch and used glyphs to personalise our skulls.



The second continent we visited for a day of culture was Asia. On Monday we visited a Hare Krishna Temple, the home of former Beatle George Harrison, which he bequeathed to the Hindu community. Our day included a ride on a cart, pulled by oxen, to the dairy farm (Gokul farm) where we learnt about the cow's sacred status. The cow is so highly valued because it gives so much; its milk is used to make cream, cheese, yoghurt and ghee, its waste is used to make fertiliser, paper and even soap and its urine has medicinal purposes. After learning all about the cow we then went inside and defrosted!

We learnt about different Hindu gods and some of us dressed as gods and goddesses. We all got the chance to wear a sari or a chadda and turban and in our appropriate attire, we sat and observed an arati ceremony at the main shrine. This was followed by a delicious vegetarian lunch which was mostly very well received and lots of second helpings were dished out. Finally, we had our faces painted as Hindus would for festivals and celebrations before heading back to school. A great day out despite the cold weather.





**Colchester Zoo**

**Year 3**

Our trip to Colchester Zoo seems a long time ago now as we have enjoyed half term and our exciting Arts Week since then but we wanted to share our fun with you.

The day was cold but luckily stayed dry. Each child picked an animal that they wanted to see and told their group leader. By the end of the day we had seen all of these animals and many more. Feeding the elephants and giraffes is always a highlight and the children overcame their fears to feed these giants. Did you know that giraffes have very long black tongues?

Despite the cold, many of the animals came out to see us. The otters posed beautifully in a line for the children, we caught a glimpse of the new baby hippo and the majestic male lion was prowling around his enclosure. We loved standing in the glass tunnel and watching the seals swim over us. They moved so fast! Mrs Moore took her group to visit the lorikeets. The children were delighted when a young couple gave them their pots of nectar so they could feed the rainbow coloured birds. They were very excited when the birds came to land on them until poor Emily got covered in poo. Then they decided it was time to leave!

Both classes listened very well and joined in discussions when we went to the Discovery Centre for our talk about endangered creatures. They were saddened to see the animal skins and items made out of animals that had been donated to the zoo by customs officers. The children were challenged to go away and learn about an ugly endangered creature. People are happy to try to save beautiful tigers but perhaps not the Big Pine Key Conehead Katydid as much. I wonder what they found out!

The children behaved impeccably and seemed to enjoy their day despite feeling a little chilly at times. We would like to thank Mr and Mrs Gapper, Ms Matthews, Mrs Phillips, Mrs Fadil, Mrs Fleet and Mrs Woodward for giving up their time to come with us.



World Book Day 2018



For more photographs visit our school website.

### Super Science Update

Welcome to the Super Science Update for February 2018. As usual, this is your one-stop shop updates about the great science learning that's happening across our school and the place to find some discussion points to get some great science talk going on at home. There's plenty to get you all talking here and, as before, there's no expectation that any of it is recorded- just get discussing!

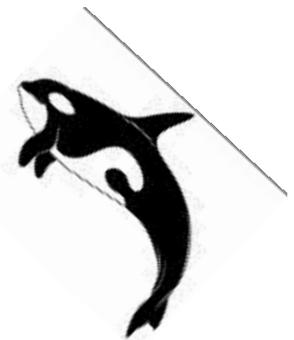
**EYFS and Year One** will be looking at seasonal changes over the coming weeks. The weather should give you plenty to discuss, such as:

- Why is it snowing/why has it been snowing?
- What happens when the snow hits the ground?
- What happens if you bring snow inside?
- Will it snow in summer? Why or why not?
- Are there any places where it never snows? Why or why not?



**Year Two** will be looking at animals over the next few weeks, examining how they can be grouped according to shared features. They will also be looking at food chains. You could ask:

- How do you know if an animal is a carnivore?
- How do you know if an animal is a herbivore?
- What different animal families do you know?
- What do all cats/birds/fish have in common? How are they different?
- The orca is top of the food chain (apex predator; nothing eats it in the wild).
- What would happen if there were no orcas?



**Year Three** will be continuing their learning about forces. So far they've been looking at pushes and pulls. In the last update we mentioned that magnets would be part of Year Three's learning and these questions could get a good discussion going!

- What metals are magnetic?
- Do magnets work on all metals?
- What do people use magnets for?
- What would happen if there was no magnetism?



### Super Science Update

Over the coming weeks **Year Four** will be learning about sound. You could ask your children:

What is the best medium for sound to travel through (sound must travel *in* something- a solid, liquid or gas).

What would happen if you were in space and a rocket whizzed past?

What makes the loudest sound on Earth?



Recently **Year Five** have been learning about forces, with a focus on gravity, friction and air resistance. Next, they'll be looking at water resistance. You could ask:

What would sink faster- a bowling ball or a car?

Would these two objects fall in the same way? Why or why not?



Over the next few weeks **Year Six** will be looking at light. To get discussions going you could ask:

How can humans see in the dark?

Could you see a white cat in a dark room?

What are shadows? How does light affect them?

