

Off with her Head!

Curriculum Newsletter

Spring Term

2024 – 2025

Owl Class



What sort of man would order the beheading of his wife? Was she really that bad? Travel back in time to the 1500s and meet the terrifying Tudors, a domineering dynasty that changed our history. Discover an opulent court where dancing and singing goes hand in hand with swift falls from favour, and even swifter falling of heads. Develop your painting skills in miniature, solve riddles and remember to protect your precious neck with a large white ruff, if you want to survive at Tudor court. Flex your detective muscles and become a criminal investigator. Will you find out the facts or will the evidence from the past bemuse you? How will you find the accused, innocent or guilty? It's your turn to take part in one of the most famous trials that the world has ever known.

Reading

Children will continue to develop their reading and comprehension skills this term. In Owl class we do whole class reading lessons. We will often explore several texts a week that are linked in some way. Some of our notable themes leading up to Summer will be Space, Equality, Light, Inspirational Women, Notable people, Spies and Spooky openings. Children will be encouraged to read from a variety of sources including books, websites, song lyrics, and fact files. This is to provide them with a broad range of materials. Furthermore, children will be encouraged to answer these questions in multiple ways. Written answers will be included with each piece of learning, as will partnered discussion and whole class discussion. Often, these pieces of reading can be interpreted in a multitude of ways so it is important that they are discussed openly and that everyone can evidence how they came to their judgement.

Spelling

Read Write Ink will continue to inform our teaching of spelling. We will explore the spelling rules taught in YR5 and YR6 through a variety of methods. We will work on, changing words with suffixes and prefixes, the *sh* sound spelt *ssi*, spellings of *ei* and *ie* and hyphenated words. In addition to this we will practice the YR5, 6 statutory spelling list, which informs the spellings sent home for homework each week. Daily practice of spellings is key when teaching children the complexities of English language rules and exceptions.



Literacy, communication and language.



This term in literacy we will be reading 'A story like the wind' by Gill Lewis. This beautifully illustrated story explores themes of freedom, music and seeking refuge. During the text a small group of refugees are crowded on a boat out at sea, they share stories as the boat travels towards safety and freedom. The children will use this text to create a piece of writing each half term. During Spring 1, the class will create their own newspaper reports about a sea rescue. They will explore and use a variety of 'writer's knowledge' during this piece such as, formal language, informal speech, semi-colons, emotive language, pronouns to avoid repetition, personification, headings, subheadings and columns. When writing and planning the children will need to consider both the interviewer's point of view in addition to the refugee they are interviewing, shifting the formality and tone of their written language.

In Spring 2 we will continue to use the same book as a starting point for our writing but this time the children will write a flashback narrative. The narrative will be about their treacherous journey across the sea and the challenges that they were faced with. This time our 'writers knowledge' will be focussed on using synonyms, antonyms, expanded noun phrases, adding suffixes to nouns or adjectives, present and past tense.

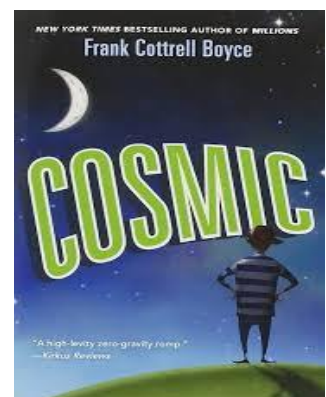
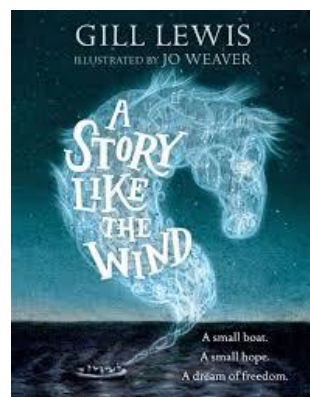
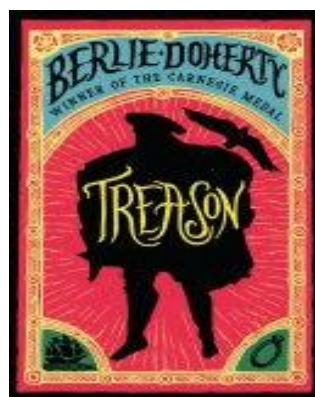
Our Focus texts;

A Story Like The Wind

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Maths

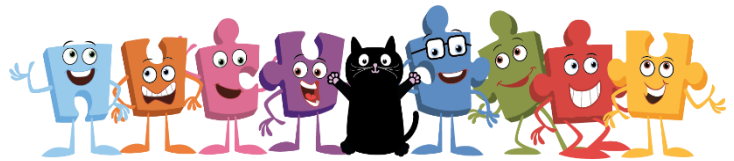
At Umerleigh, we use the Mastery Maths approach to ensure a deep and thorough understanding of mathematical concepts. This approach emphasizes not just learning procedures, but truly grasping the underlying principles behind them. Students are encouraged to explore concepts in depth, apply their knowledge to a variety of problems, and demonstrate their understanding through different methods. By focusing on mastery, we aim to build strong, lasting mathematical skills that will support their future learning and problem-solving abilities. We do this through a variety of 'Dive Deeper' tasks which enable the children to view questions and solutions in another way.

During the first half term we will have several focusses for our learning. Initially we will work on Fractions. Children will learn about adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing various fractions, using these skills across mixed numbers and improper fractions. In addition to this we will develop our understanding of decimals, position and direction. Children will also be frequently revisiting previously taught mathematical methods and given frequent opportunities to improve their arithmetic ability in preparation for May.

After half term we will move onto developing our knowledge of algebra. Children will learn how to solve simple one, and two, step problems. Additionally, we will cover measurement where the children will learn to convert metric measures.

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE)

This term in PSHE, students will be engaging with the 'Jigsaw' scheme to deepen their understanding of personal and social development. Through the 'Dreams and Goals' module they will make personal learning goals and then plan a series of steps to success. Children will also learn about making a difference both locally and internationally.



After half term we will move on to the unit 'Healthy Me'. Children will learn about making healthy choices, balanced diets, being physically active and keeping themselves and others safe.



Physical education (PE)

In P.E. lessons, students have been developing their handball skills, focusing on dribbling, passing, and teamwork. We will also consider the importance of movement and how short sharp movements particularly benefit this sport. These skills have been crucial in enhancing their understanding of the game and improving their coordination and strategy.

During this term, the students will also attend swimming lessons at South Molton. They will be assessed and grouped which will allow instructors to best cater for their abilities. Then they will work on improving their confidence in the water, refining swimming techniques across different strokes, and building endurance. Lessons will also focus on water survival skills, such as floating, treading water, and safe entry and exit techniques. These sessions aim to ensure all students achieve competency in swimming, equipping them with lifelong skills to stay safe and enjoy the water.

Art and Design

They will learn to observe and replicate facial proportions, study light and shadow to create depth, and use blending and shading to add realism. Children will explore a range of materials, such as pencils, paints, and pastels, enhancing their ability to choose the right tools for their creative goals. These lessons also promote patience, attention to detail, and perseverance. Through practice and experimentation, children will grow in confidence, refine their artistic expression, and develop a deeper appreciation for the art of portraiture.

In Design and Technology, we will learn about electrical circuits. Mr Brayley will be teaching the children about the inner workings of a desktop. The children will learn about the purpose of each component, disassemble it, then reassemble it into a working desktop.



Computing

In our computing sequence, students will build essential programming and problem-solving skills through an engaging project. They will explore how to use conditions and select appropriate outcomes to create interactive experiences. By asking effective questions and applying logical thinking, students will design, test, and evaluate their own quizzes. This process will develop their understanding of algorithms and debugging while encouraging creativity and resilience as they refine their work. These activities provide valuable skills for coding and digital literacy, preparing them for the challenges of a technology-driven world.



History

In our Tudors history topic, Year 6 students will develop their understanding of this fascinating period by exploring key events, significant figures, and daily life during Tudor times. They will investigate the reigns of monarchs like Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, examining their impact on religion, society, and culture. Through analysing primary and secondary sources, students will build critical thinking and enquiry skills, learning to evaluate evidence and form well-supported conclusions about the past. This topic will also encourage them to make connections between the Tudors and how they shaped modern Britain.

Geography

Through these lessons, Owls will develop key geographical skills by engaging with maps, research, and analysis. They will locate Henry VIII's homes on a UK map and delve into the features and grandeur of one in detail, honing their map-reading and investigative abilities. Additionally, by mapping the routes of Tudor explorers, they will gain an understanding of global trade routes and their historical significance. Finally, comparing Tudor and modern maps of London will help students identify changes over time, explore how human and physical geography shape a city, and discover which Tudor features still exist today.



French

In Key Stage 2, our focus is on the topic of food, where students will enhance their French language skills by talking and writing about what they ate and drank in the past tense. They will express their likes and dislikes regarding different foods and drinks, using a French dictionary to expand their vocabulary further. Additionally, students will follow and write their own recipe instructions in French, combining practical and linguistic skills in a fun and engaging way.



How can you help at home?

- Listen to your child read daily and ask them questions about what they are reading to aid their comprehension.
- Practice any spelling homework frequently.
- Engage with doodle learning – this will greatly improve your child’s learning, even if they logon for 10 minutes a day.
- Encourage curiosity. If your child is studying a topic like the The Tudors, encourage them to explore related subjects through books or videos.
- Support with school topics like The Tudors through exploration by visiting local libraries, watching documentaries, or doing research together.

Thank you for your continued support!

Mr Lovelass