

# *Wonders of the Ancient World!*

Curriculum Newsletter

Term 2025 – 2026

Owl Class



This term, our young historians will climb into their own imaginary time machine and journey thousands of years back to explore three of the world's very first civilisations. They will wander through the bustling streets of Ancient Sumer, sail down the mighty Nile to uncover the secrets of Ancient Egypt and step inside the mysterious cities of the Indus Valley. Along the way, the children will discover how these pioneering peoples built extraordinary cities, developed new technologies and left behind fascinating clues to their success and decline. Through hands-on investigations, creative projects and lively discussions, they will experience the excitement of piecing together the past and see how these ancient worlds still shape the one we live in today.

## Reading

This term our reading lessons will take the children on a variety of journeys. We'll be exploring the themes and messages hidden inside much-loved Disney songs, enjoying thought-provoking short stories and venturing into the icy landscapes of brave Arctic explorers. The children will also dive into timeless children's classics, study fascinating poetry inspired by beetles and nature, and experiment with writing and analysing spooky story openings that build atmosphere and suspense. Along the way, they'll develop their comprehension, vocabulary and critical thinking skills while discovering how writers use language to spark imagination and emotion.

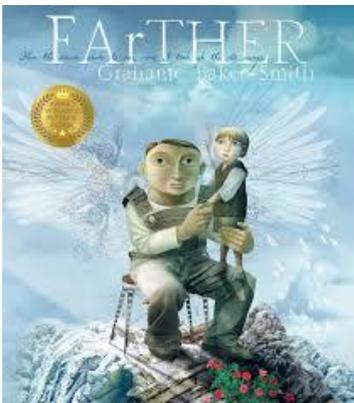
## Spelling

This term, we'll continue to strengthen the children's spelling through the Read Write Inc. (RWI) programme. Our focus will be on some of the trickier patterns that often catch writers out. The children will explore words with silent letters – such as the silent **b** and **t** – and learn how to spot and remember them. They'll also investigate how words change when they end in **-ible** and **-able**, as well as their adverb forms **-ibly** and **-ably**. Through investigations and regular practice, pupils will develop strategies to spell these words confidently and accurately, boosting both their writing fluency and their spelling independence.



## Literacy, communication and language.

In Literacy this term, the children will be exploring the beautifully illustrated book *FaRATHER* by Grahame Baker-Smith. Using the story as inspiration, they will write their own setting descriptions to bring scenes vividly to life and compose a letter from one of the characters to develop empathy and voice in their writing. Along the way, they will deepen their understanding of key grammatical concepts such as adverbials, expanded noun phrases, metaphors, similes, varied sentence structures, modal verbs and parenthesis using a dash. They will also focus on choosing effective words and phrases to show how characters feel and to create atmosphere. This work will help them to refine their writing style, extend their vocabulary and become more confident, thoughtful writers.

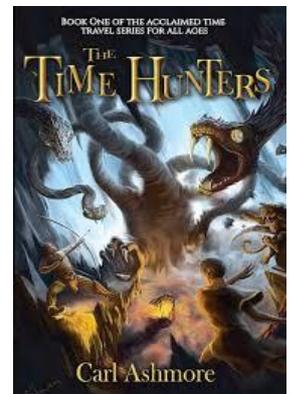


### Our Focus texts;

FaRATHER  
by Grahame Baker-Smith

The Time Hunters  
by Carl Ashmore

*Variety of texts from reading curriculum*



## Maths

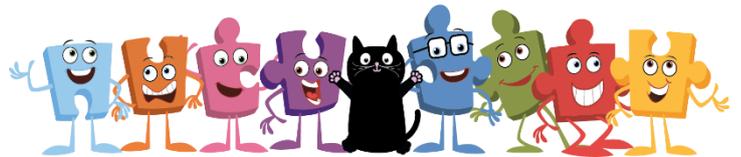
At Umberleigh, we use the Mastery Maths approach to ensure a deep and thorough understanding of mathematical concepts. This approach emphasizes not just learning procedures, but truly grasping the underlying principles behind them. Students are encouraged to explore concepts in depth, apply their knowledge 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.



This term, our Year 6 mathematicians will build on their number sense and calculation skills through four key areas: place value, addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, and fractions. In place value, they will explore numbers up to 1,000,000, including reading, writing, comparing, ordering, rounding, and using powers of ten. In addition and subtraction, children will develop mental strategies, tackle multi-step problems, and use inverse operations to check their answers. In multiplication and division, they will investigate multiples, factors, prime numbers, square and cube numbers, and scaling by powers of ten. Finally, in fractions, pupils will find and compare equivalent fractions, convert between improper fractions and mixed numbers, and practise adding and subtracting fractions and mixed numbers. Through practical activities and problem-solving challenges, children will strengthen their confidence and fluency with numbers.

## Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE)

In PSHE this term, our pupils will take part in two units designed to help them understand themselves and the world around them. In the first half-term, titled *Being Me in My World*, they will explore what it means to be a global citizen, think about their own future goals, and set personal targets for what they want to achieve this year. In the second half-term, *Celebrating Difference*, the children will learn about understanding and respecting differences between people, why bullying can happen and how to challenge it, and the importance of celebrating diversity. Through discussions, activities and reflection, pupils will develop empathy, self-awareness and a stronger sense of community.



## Physical education (PE)

In PE this term, the children will be developing their football skills. They'll practise key techniques such as dribbling, passing, controlling the ball and shooting, as well as learning how to work together effectively as a team. Through fun drills, small-sided games and friendly competitions, pupils will build their confidence, coordination and fitness while also learning about fair play, respect and sportsmanship. By the end of the unit, they'll have a stronger understanding of the game and improved skills they can use both in and out of school.



## Art and Design

Autumn 1

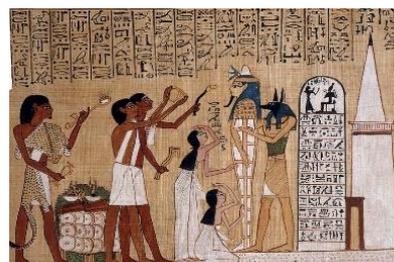


In art this half term will be exploring the fascinating world of sculpture through the theme of ancient civilisations. As part of our topic, children will learn about the art and design of cultures of Ancient Egypt, Ancient Sumer, and the Indus Valley. They will then use this knowledge to inspire their own creative projects, including making clay pots, using the slab technique and designing decorative jewellery. These hands-on activities will help develop their skills in shaping, moulding, and decorating clay. They will then investigate traditional Egyptian art styles, colours, and symbolism before

designing their own Egyptian-style masks. Using papier-mâché, card and paint, they will build and decorate their own 3D mask sculptures, developing skills in modelling, construction, and painting techniques.

## Autumn 2

We will then move onto drawing and painting, focusing on portraits and landscapes. We will create portraits of pharaohs and Egyptian gods and focus on making shapes symmetrical, using bright colours and meaningful symbols. Children will experiment with mixing secondary and tertiary colours, using warm and cool colours for effect and experiment with tints, tones, and shades.



## Computing

This term in Computing, our pupils will become digital detectives as they explore how information travels across the internet. They'll learn how devices use IP addresses to find each other, how messages are broken down into data packets and reassembled at their destination, and the different ways we communicate online – from emails and video calls to instant messages. They will also continue to develop their typing skills using Doorway and BBC Dance Mat, improving speed, accuracy and confidence at the keyboard. Through interactive activities, simulations and problem-solving tasks, the children will see the hidden systems that make everyday online communication possible. By the end of the unit, they'll have a clearer understanding of how the internet works and how to use it thoughtfully, safely and responsibly.



## History

This term, our pupils are travelling back thousands of years to investigate three of the world's first great civilisations: Ancient Sumer, Ancient Egypt and the Indus Valley. They are not only learning about the rise, achievements and everyday life of these societies, but also developing their disciplinary knowledge – the skills and thinking used by real historians. Children will learn how

to ask historical questions, examine evidence, spot similarities and differences, consider causes and consequences, and understand how and why interpretations of the past can differ. By combining rich factual knowledge with these investigative skills, pupils will build a deeper, more critical understanding of how these ancient civilisations shaped the world we live in today.

## Geography

This term, our pupils will take a geographical journey alongside their history learning to explore the landscapes that shaped Ancient Sumer, Ancient Egypt and the Indus Valley. They will study the physical features of these regions – such as rivers, floodplains and fertile soils – and investigate how climate, resources and location influenced where people settled and how they lived. Alongside this, they will develop their disciplinary knowledge as geographers by using maps, atlases and digital tools to locate places, interpret data and compare environments. By combining place knowledge with these investigative skills, pupils will gain a clearer understanding of how geography shaped these early civilisations and how people interacted with their environment to build thriving societies.



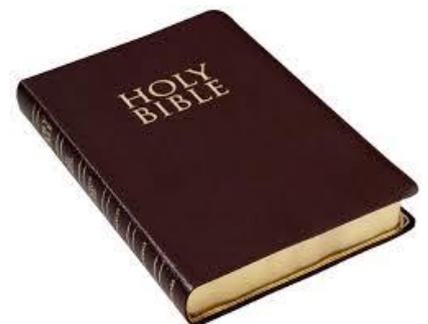
## Science

This term, our Year 6 scientists will explore two exciting areas of science: living things and their habitats, and electrical circuits. In biology, they'll investigate the conditions needed for life, learn how to group and classify animals, plants, and microorganisms, and explore the work of Carl Linnaeus, the scientist who created the system we still use today. In physics, children will construct and draw series circuits, explore complete and incomplete circuits, and study how changes in circuits affect voltage through

planning, carrying out, and evaluating their own experiments. Through hands-on investigations and problem-solving challenges, pupils will develop their scientific thinking, observation skills, and understanding of the world around them.

## Religious education (RE)

This term, our pupils will delve into two key questions in Christianity. They will explore "How to live: What would Jesus do?", learning about the values, teachings, and example of Jesus and how these guide Christians in making choices and treating others today. They will also investigate "Why do Christians believe that Jesus was the Messiah?", considering the significance of Jesus' life, actions, and the promises he fulfilled according to Christian belief. Through discussion, reflection, and engaging activities, children will develop a deeper understanding of Christian faith, moral thinking, and the ways beliefs can shape everyday life.



## Music

This term in KS2, children will be learning the guitar. Starting with the basics of positioning and fretting notes, children will progress to learning full chord progressions and explore synthesising creative writing skills with their playing to create group compositions. Children will listen to live musical performances and analyse key elements: rhythm, melody and chord structure.



### Our topic big event

We're thrilled to share that we have booked an unforgettable virtual reality experience for the children. They will zoom back over 5,000 years to the time of the Pharaohs to explore one of the world's oldest and most fascinating cultures. Using state-of-the-art VR headsets, pupils will step inside pyramids and tombs, decipher hieroglyphics, discover ancient inventions such as toothpaste, and see how skilled embalmers prepared



mummies for the afterlife. They'll "meet" the animal-headed gods of Ancient Egypt, explore the Book of the Dead, and even find out whether their hearts are pure enough to enter Duat, the underworld!

Developed with experts and fully aligned to the History curriculum, this immersive experience allows children to look around in 360° at treasures and artefacts from this incredible period. It's a memorable way to visit Ancient Egypt without leaving the classroom, and a fantastic way to bring their learning to life.

### 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 log on for 10 minutes a day.
- Encourage curiosity. If your child is studying a topic like the Ancient Egyptians or classification of animals, encourage them to explore related subjects through books or videos.
- Support with school topics like 'Wonders of the Ancient World', by visiting local libraries, watching documentaries, or doing research together.

Thank you for your continued support!

Mr Lovelass