



Year 5/6 Curriculum Newsletter

Edgewood
School

Spring Term 2017

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 'how to help at home' newsletter for the first half of the spring term. After a fantastic start to the year, our Year 5/6 pupils are now well-settled in their classes and have already made some great progress. As always, there is more information on our website pages about learning in school. Visit:

www.edgewoodprimaryschool.co.uk

to read about our curriculum in more detail

Year 5/6 team

Year 6 National Curriculum Tests

For those of you with children in Year 6, you will be aware that we are now just a few months away from the National Curriculum tests. Over the coming weeks we will be providing additional preparation lessons to help the children to revise and secure the knowledge they need to succeed in the tests. From February we will also make additional after-school support available.

Many families have already purchased the additional revision materials for use at home, and we would encourage the use of these over coming weeks.

There is also a short information video about the new tests available on the Year 5/6 pages of the school website.



Theme & English learning

During the first half of the spring term, we will be focussing our studies on the theme of **The Americas**, looking at the geography of the continents, the attractions of Florida to tourists and the rainforests of the Amazon. The children will also be challenged to learn as many of the countries of the Americas as they can – there are lots of them!

In **English** we will be focussing on **writing to persuade**, focussing first on writing a travel brochure entry for a rainforest resort. Following work on deforestation, we will then be writing voiceover scripts for a persuasive video based on the idea of protecting the rainforests. The children will use pronouns and rhetorical questions to engage the reader, rhetorical questions and expanded noun phrases to persuade them of their views, and use adverbials and semi-colons to help structure their ideas.

In **History** lessons we will find out about the Maya civilisation of central America, looking at their lives, food, beliefs and the mysterious collapse of the civilisation. As part of our **Geography** studies, the children will find out about the climate zones around the world and the habitats they provide. We'll also study the diversity of the rainforest regions.

How to help at home

As ever, we encourage children to be reading regularly **at home**. In Year 5/6 we expect all children to read at least 5 times each week. This experience of reading is invaluable for improving reading skill, but also for developing children's knowledge of interesting vocabulary and sentence types to create their own interesting writing.

As we study the Americas, we will also be looking at aspects of world geography such as time zones, latitude and longitude, and features such as the equator and tropics. If you have an atlas or globe at home, this is a great time to investigate the world – Google Maps does a good job too!

You could ask your child about the devices we use to write persuasively. See if they can explain what an expanded noun phrase is, or a rhetorical question. You could also watch some famous speeches to spot them in practice.

Maths learning

In **Mrs Major's and Mr Tidd's** maths groups, there will be a good deal of work focussed on division and fractions during the spring term. This is an area that features much more heavily in the new national curriculum, and so will present more demanding challenge for the children than in the past.

The challenges will include understanding the uses of fractions, and carrying out calculations using fractions, such as addition ($\frac{3}{9} + \frac{7}{9} = 1\frac{1}{9}$). It is useful for children to understand fractions in two ways, so we will think of fractions both as a part-measure (i.e. that $\frac{3}{4}$ represents **3 out of 4 equal parts**) and by placing fractions on the number line (i.e. recognising that $\frac{5}{6}$ is larger than $\frac{4}{6}$). We will also convert between improper fractions and mixed numbers, such as finding that $\frac{7}{6}$ is equal to $1\frac{1}{6}$.

In **Mr McLeod's** maths group the focus will be on geometry, focussed particularly on measures. This will include conversions between metric units, for example, knowing that 34 metres is 0.034 kilometres, and knowing the meanings of the main metric prefixes (such as *milli-*, *centi-* and *kilo-*). We will then use these skills to solve word problems in a range of contexts, including with money and other measures.

How to help at home

The most important support for all fractions work is the ability to recall multiplication and division facts at speed. We stress the importance of this knowledge to the children regularly, and would ask that parents support their children in learning their tables as often as possible. There are plenty of free apps available for phones and tablets, and lots of online games and videos to help with practice of the tables. One easy-to-access site is **Hit the Button** which the children will be familiar with from school.

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button>

You can also practise tables regularly just by asking quick questions in the car, on the way to school, or even over the dinner table. Once children know their tables so much else in Maths becomes much easier!

Other Subjects

Alongside our main subjects, we will also be learning the following this term:

Art: We will study the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. The children will look at her self-portrait work and complete a study of their own self-portrait thinking about things that are important to them.

Computing: The children will be introduced to spreadsheets. They will use cell references to identify cells, simple formulas to carry out budgeting calculations, and use the chart functions to draw graphs of survey results.

Physical Education: The focus in this half-term will be on dance, looking at traditional dances and Samba.

Reading: Our reading focus lessons are based on the novel *The Demon Headmaster* by Gillian Cross. We will explore how the author creates a sense of character and how we can find meaning by drawing inferences from the text.

Science: This term we will be studying a unit on evolution. The children will learn about the developments of plants and animals as they have adapted to their surroundings.

Homework

Homework remains the same each week. Every child is expected to read on at least 5 occasions each week at home. Please ensure that they record their reading in the homework diary each week. Alongside the reading, they will have a new spelling pattern to learn each week. Ask them to explain the pattern to you, before writing each of the given spellings in a sentence. In addition, each child will bring home a task from their maths group which should be completed in the green homework book. Year 6 pupils will have additional tasks each week from their Achieve 100 revision guides. Please help them to ensure that these are returned to school every Monday.

As you can see, it's another packed half-term ahead.

We will look forward to meeting many of you at parents evenings on 20th and 22nd of March, where we can discuss the progress your child has made already this year. In the meantime, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher.

The Y5/6 team