



*E A P* into Writing:

Creative Approaches for Supporting  
Early Writing Development

A series of posters designed by Leicestershire Reception Teachers, to document inspirational starting points which have formed the basis for young children's writing .

# Setting the Scene for

## *L E A P* into Writing

Following the success of 'Putting the Wow into Writing', a new cohort of Reception Teachers enthusiastically enrolled to become action researchers within their own school, working with their own children. Their aim was to improve the writing provision for their young 4 and 5 year olds and to make writing 'irresistible'. These teachers were eager to implement change and to evaluate the impact on the children. Auditing their own starting points this group of forward thinking teachers met to be introduced to new ideas, and to work with likeminded people. Exploring new 'hooks for learning' and discussing their findings they set off to introduce new innovation into their curriculums.

Keeping in touch through a 'google community' there began a sharing of ideas, ranging from a small change in the continuous provision to aliens landing from outer space.

At each session these motivated teachers shared learning and development through photographs, film, work and of course, plenty of talk and discussion. New thoughts and considerations were introduced: how might we use the outdoors or the arts to support writing, how might parents and families be involved, what about the local community? We thought big!! We thought let's

help children *L E A P* into Writing!

## Evaluating the wider impact

- I led a whole school staff meeting and governors meeting which has inspired others in school
- I have better links with the community and use these to support opportunities for writing
- I have used IT more in school to support children's writing
- All my school are now using green screening
- The rest of the school are so impressed with what we are doing in the early years and I am so passionate about it
- I have now got the Year 1 teacher using inspirational provocations
- After being observed by the Head Teacher and Y1 teacher, they are now making changes to the writing provision in Y1
- Parents and the wider family and friends!! I involve them much more now
- The children are so enthusiastic, they have written to the head, bursar and to the other classes. Now everyone is involved
- This project has given me back my confidence!
- My continuous provision is so different! I have implemented so many of the wonderful ideas
- My children want to write!!
- I had no idea we had so many skilled families we could utilise to inspire the children to write
- This project has helped me to get a new job! They were inspired
- It has changed the way I teach. I am always looking for creative starting points now
- I have gained a promotion and won an award!!
- Who would have thought a gnome and a pheasant would have sparked so many ideas
- I am inspired and so my children are inspired
- I have freed up my timetable and follow the children's interests
- I have shared good practice at network meetings and organised training
- So important that children write for a purpose, and there are so many real reasons to write
- Sharing ideas
- We now have 'whole school exciting writing' –and it's all about fun!
- Why hadn't I thought of the community links before? There are so many reasons for children to write

What follows are a selection of the teachers' and childrens' favourite 'bits' which have helped the children

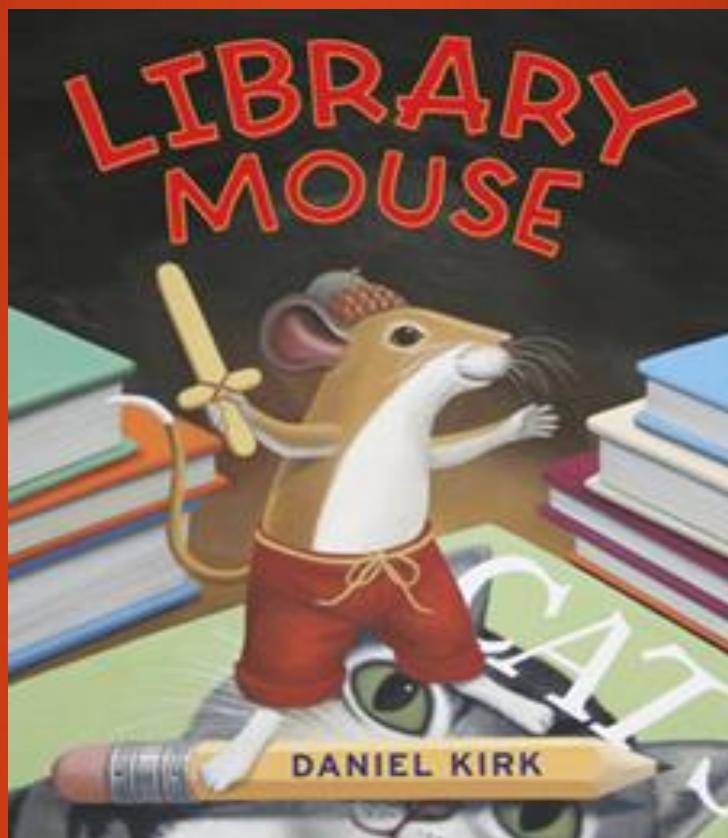
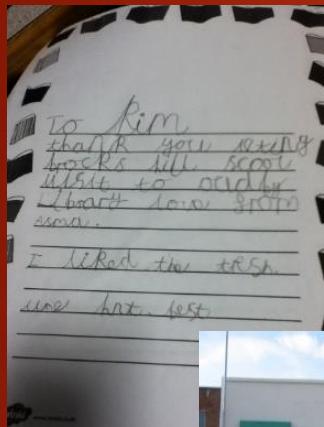
*L E A P* into Writing.

Enjoy these delightful documentation posters which introduce you to 'glimpses' of the teachers' work with their 4 and 5 year olds.

# The Library

Cathryn Shilling Brocks Hill Primary School

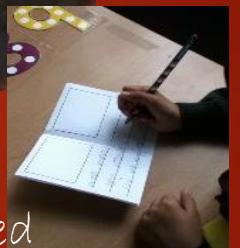
The Library Mouse sparked a great deal of independent reading and writing.



We visited the local library and wrote letters to say thank you. Some children wrote a recount for the school newsletter.

Our role play became a library. Children issued membership cards, sorted books into categories and enjoyed reading.

A small door appeared in our 'library'. A letter explained that we now had our own library mouse in the classroom.



Each day the children loved checking for new letters from Molly Mouse and replying to them. They wrote letters, made books and even organised a birthday party for her.

My name is Molly Mouse. I am really quite old. I forget how old I am as a matter of fact.

Let me tell you a little bit about myself. I have just moved into Brocks Hill School, near the door in the role play room. It looks like it's a very little home but it's big enough for me and all my books! It's a perfect home for me - there are books everywhere.

I love books you see. I love all different types of books - picture books, information books, pop up books, story books - anything at all.

I really love writing books more than anything else in the whole world. I write stories all night long, sitting at my little desk with a candle for light. Sometimes I write books with my special pen, sometimes I use a pencil and sometimes I type them on my computer.

I like to write story books most of all. They can be happy or sad, funny or serious, true or made up. They are all great fun to write.

Some people say I could be an author. That would be amazing. I think books can make people so happy, especially children.

I usually stay up all night long writing books. It's very quiet at night and no one disturbs me. I work until morning time when I have a quick snack of cheese and a drink of delicious milk. Then it's time for bed.



I have heard there are children in this place. I wonder if they can read and write? I would love to know...



# Inspirational Starting Points



**ROLE PLAY**



**BLOCK PLAY**



**SMALL WORLD**

**STORY MAPS**



Dear Kandinsky Class,  
 I hear that you have been enjoying the story **FROZEN**. I think that the story makes me look bad, but I was only trying to help Elsa.  
 I hope you change your mind about me. I've sent you a present.  
 Love  
 Marshmallow xx

**LETTERS FROM CHARACTERS**



**POSTERS**

**WANTED**



Elsa has magical powers  
 she has a very special gift  
 she has a very special gift

TO GO Anna  
 I am sorry  
 for freezing you  
 here  
 from  
 Elsa

**LETTERS**

she has a special gift  
 she has a special gift

**CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS**

# Nature!

Following our nature topic and as part of Forest Schools, our children have turned into mini 'eco warriors' this year.

They have loved learning about minibeasts, plants, pond wildlife and life cycles and this has had an impact on their independent learning.



We visited local ponds to do some wildlife spotting. We saw several sets of swans, and when we looked more closely we realised that the females were sitting on nests, complete with eggs. This prompted the children to want to create and write signs to protect the swans and their eggs.

Unfortunately, on our walk we also saw lots of rubbish floating in the ponds. This sparked a very big discussion about how we can look after our environment and why it is important to throw our rubbish away. This resulted in us making posters that we later displayed around the rest of the school to teach the other children about rubbish.



We then used the Chatterpix app to pretend to be the pond wildlife. The different animals, frogs, swans and moorhens, thanked the community for caring for their homes and looking after their young.

# books to inspire

Katie Stansfield  
Gaddesby Primary School



Busy Bear is my favourite bear from when I was a little girl. Each year Busy Bear meets the new cohort and is adored by all. The children play with him, read to him and often use Busy Bear as an inspirational starting point during my topics. Over the course of this year Busy Bear has taught us about people that help us, different traditional tales and he has even been captured by pirates!

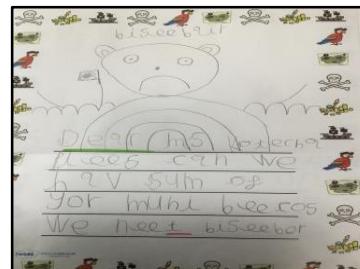
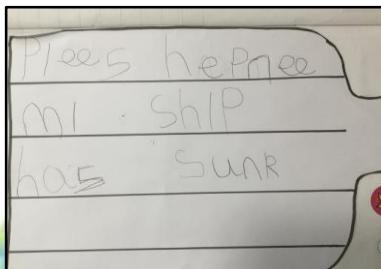


We began our most recent topic 'Commotion in the Ocean' with a focus on pirates. We visited Forest School and took part in a pirate drama, building pirate ships using man made materials.



We made our role play corner into a pirate ship and had great fun pretending to be Blackbeard. Busy Bear looked after our ship, he was the captain.

One day Busy Bear went missing and a video had been left for us to watch. We were inspired to write letters to get him back.



We even scrubbed a deck!

Children's voice...

"I enjoyed making the treasure chest and when I saw Blackbeard he was mean and I wanted Busy Bear back!" -- M

"I was scared when I saw Blackbeard and I wrote him a letter." -- M



# Rainforests



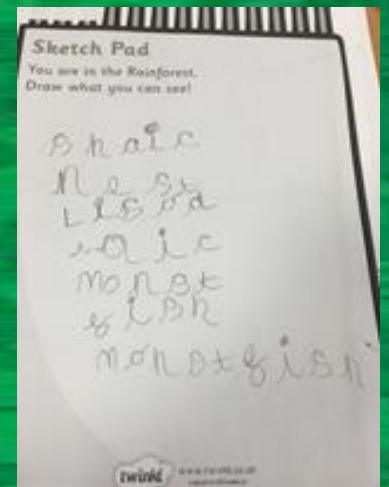
## Exploration

We explored the topic of rainforests by building a small world rainforest. We used herb pots, wooden slices and felt. The children has access to water sprayers and rain makers. We read non fiction books and explored the painting 'Tiger in a Tropical Storm'.



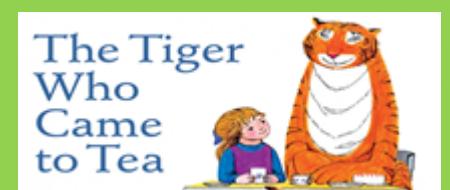
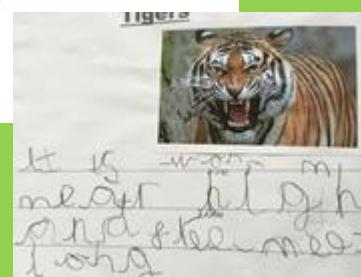
## Drama

During Welly Wednesday we used our imagination to visit the rainforest. We packed our backpacks, got on a boat and set sail. When we 'arrived' we entered the rainforest (our nature area) and explored our surroundings. The children then drew and listed what they could see. They saw leopards, tigers, sloths, parrots, monkeys and even river dolphins.



## Writing Challenge

After reading 'The Tiger who came to tea' we received a letter from the zoo. Their tiger had escaped for the day, and upon return had an awful belly ache. But we knew what he had been doing! We researched tigers and wrote facts about them including their diet. We then wrote a letter back to the zoo explaining that he had been eating all the wrong things. A live web cam from a zoo was kept on the interactive whiteboard which had the children captivated. Some boys made new enclosure designs for the zoo using construction.

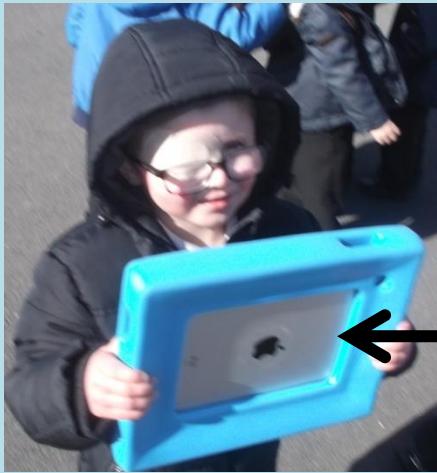




# Townlands C of E Primary Academy



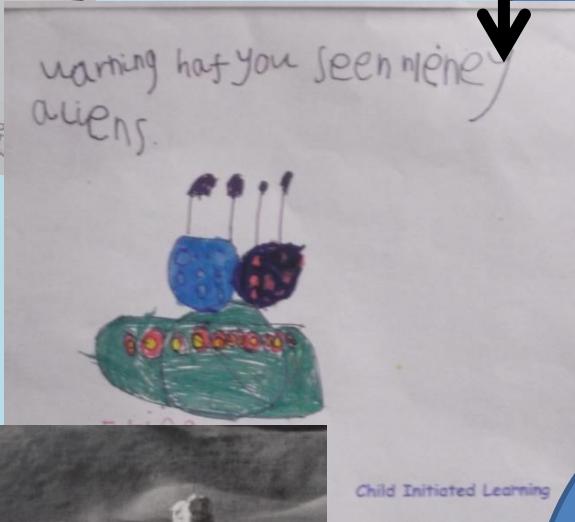
Aliens visited our school! They left a message for the children from Bob, the Man on the Moon.



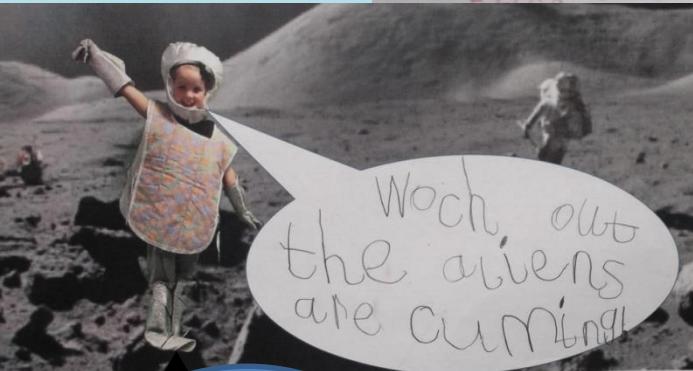
The children had to use iPads to read the special QR messages from the aliens to find out what Bob wanted them to do.



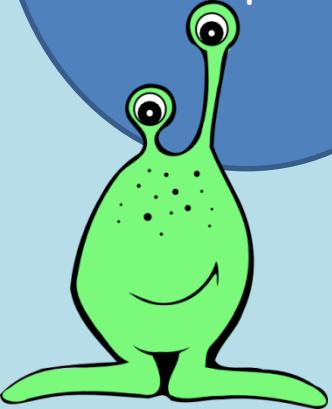
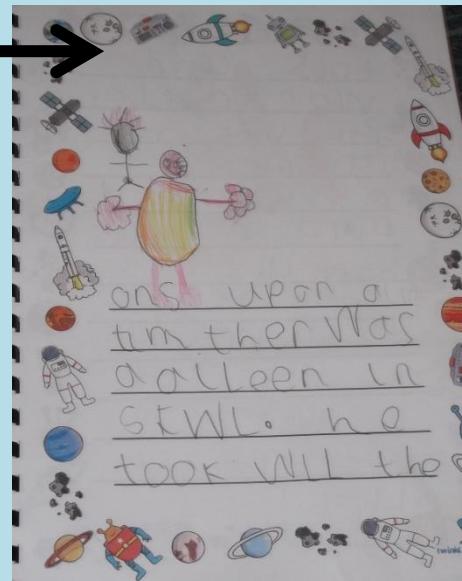
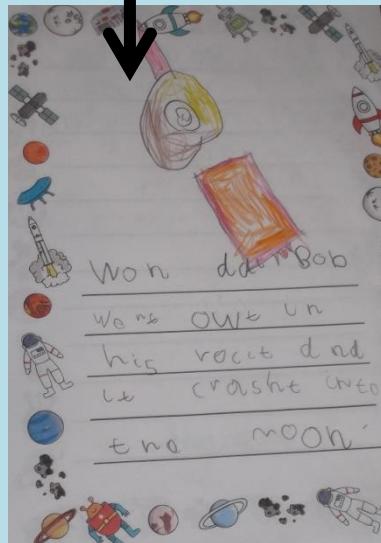
The children came up with their own writing opportunities, writing posters, labels, letters, adventure stories and more!

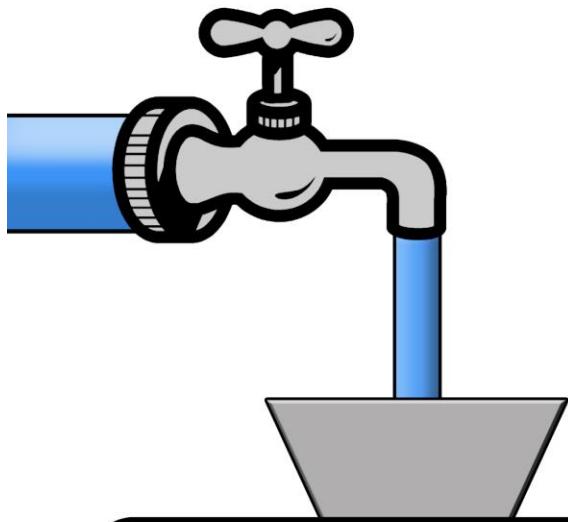


We wrote a letter back to the aliens asking them to collect the writing for Bob. We tied the letter to some balloons and launched them into space.



We also took the opportunity to try some green screening- the children loved it and added their own captions.





# Water Writing at Glenfield Primary School

The idea behind our inspirational writing point was something quite basic: water. We decided to have a water day and introduced the activities.



The first activity was to stimulate talk for writing - 'What is in the ice?' The children were excited to look at the ice and watch what was to emerge as the ice melted. We encouraged this as an (unofficial) competition to see who could write down the right answer. The children seemed keen on this activity.



The second activity was making ice lollies and the children enjoyed reading the instructions to make their own ice lollies. Those who were able were encouraged to make their own instructions the following week.



The third activity was wax resist writing. The children practised their tricky words on the paper and asked a friend to read them. They loved the idea of the 'magic writing' appearing as the paint and water was brushed over the top. We then enhanced this idea with water pictures and secret message writing.



Outside, we used the water idea for lots of independent writing opportunities such as:

- Looking at toys trapped in the ice and writing down what we could see.
- Practising our handwriting with buckets and water.
- Mixing water and chalk for writing, drawing and mark making.

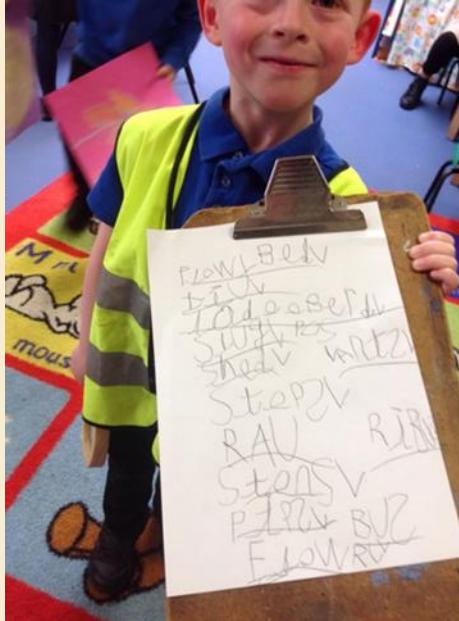




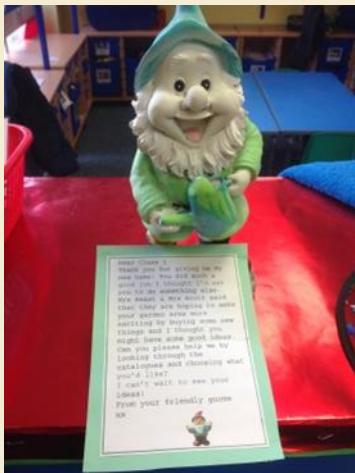
# Garden Renovations! Katie Keast Old Dalby Primary

6. We are currently organising a team of parent helpers to come in and help the class tidy the garden ready for the new equipment (budget yet to be confirmed! But we will of course be writing thank you letters and hopefully invitations to parents for the grand opening!

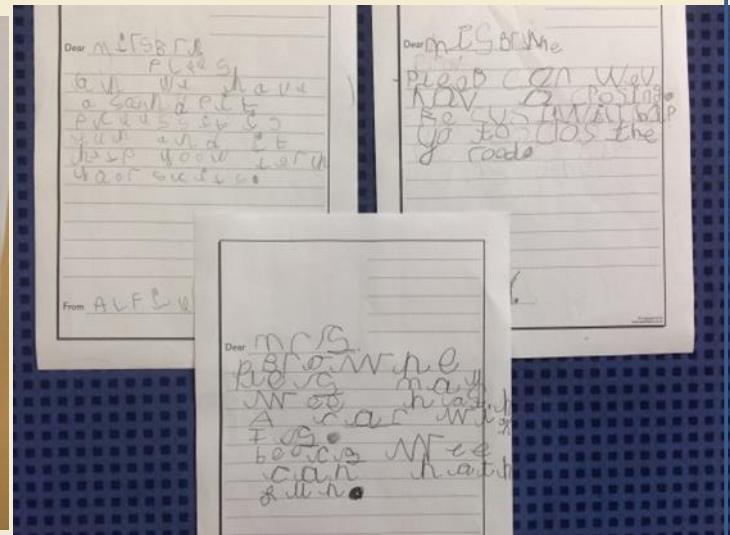
1. Our topic is 'All Things Bright & Beautiful'. The class decided they'd like a Garden centre and so we all jotted our ideas down and then got to work! The children loved being the ones to design the role play and also seem more engaged with it because they have a sense of ownership. Lots of children have commented on what might need labelling or where they need posters and have just gone and done it. There's been no need for me to suggest any writing!



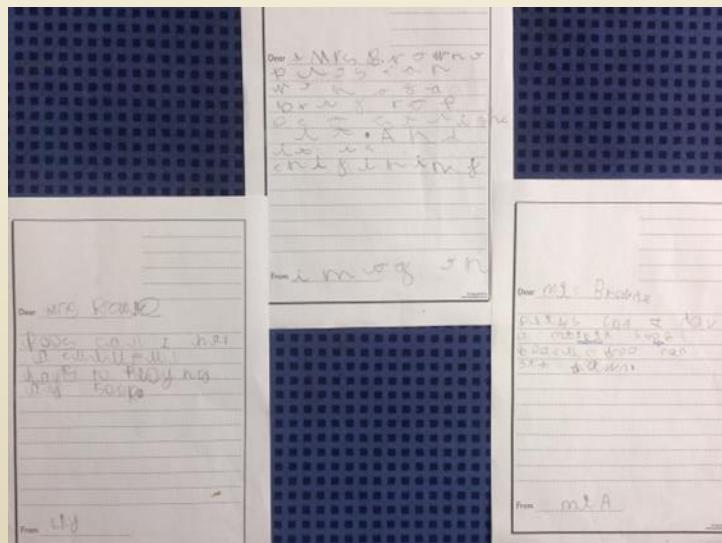
5. When we'd sent our letters we watched a couple of videos about wildlife and it got the children talking about any who had homes in our garden. They went out with magnifying glasses and came back with lists of insects they saw and which areas we'd have to leave alone so as not to disturb them!



2. I then introduced this little guy! Each week he sets the class a challenge by way of a letter & the first challenge was to help pick some new equipment for our garden.



Our wish lists!



4. These writers couldn't read what they'd written a couple of weeks ago! (left) And my anxious, reluctant boys who would have cried at the prospect of writing back in January! (Above)



3. The children worked out that it would be the Head Teacher who they'd need to ask to buy the equipment and so would need to write a letter. We all practised saying what our letter would say & we had even the most shyest of child want to tell their classmate what they were asking for! (A very proud moment for me but also evidence at how engrossed and committed they were to the activity.)



Foxes never quit!  
 Leicester City  
 Following child interest—  
 Mr Mc  
 Highcliffe Primary School



Blue for Leicester City Day



Leicester City writing area

We green screened a video of the King Power Stadium. We told the children that today we are going to write good luck letters to Leicester City. We uploaded it to Tapestry for the children and parents to see and get excited before school.



Post box for our letters. I took photos of their letters and I am going to email them



PICCOLLAGE

FOOTBALL INTEREST: EXTRA WRITING AREA

Going to play highlights on a couple of tablets for them to write about / provide commentary for.

The children have been talking about Leicester City a lot so after school today is set up this extra writing area. A very kind set of grandparents let me borrow some mechnaise for the children to look at / be inspired by.

PICCOLLAGE

We wrote newspapers.



Come on Leicester City! Such an amazing child led and interest day 🙌

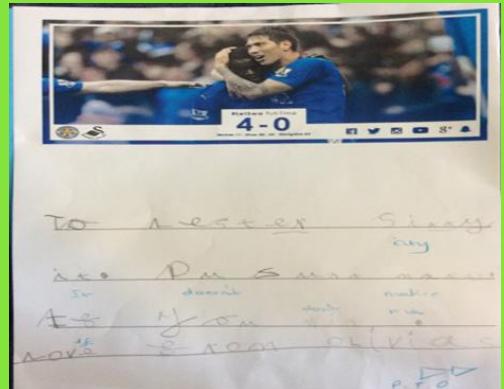
Football-recording the score and measuring time, taking turns and working as a team.



We supported each other and sang football chants that we made up.

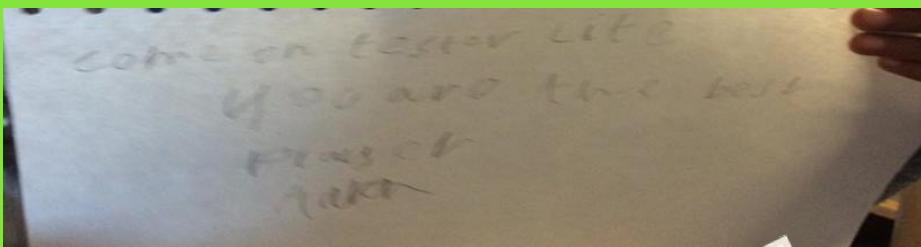
The children made many different Leicester flags.

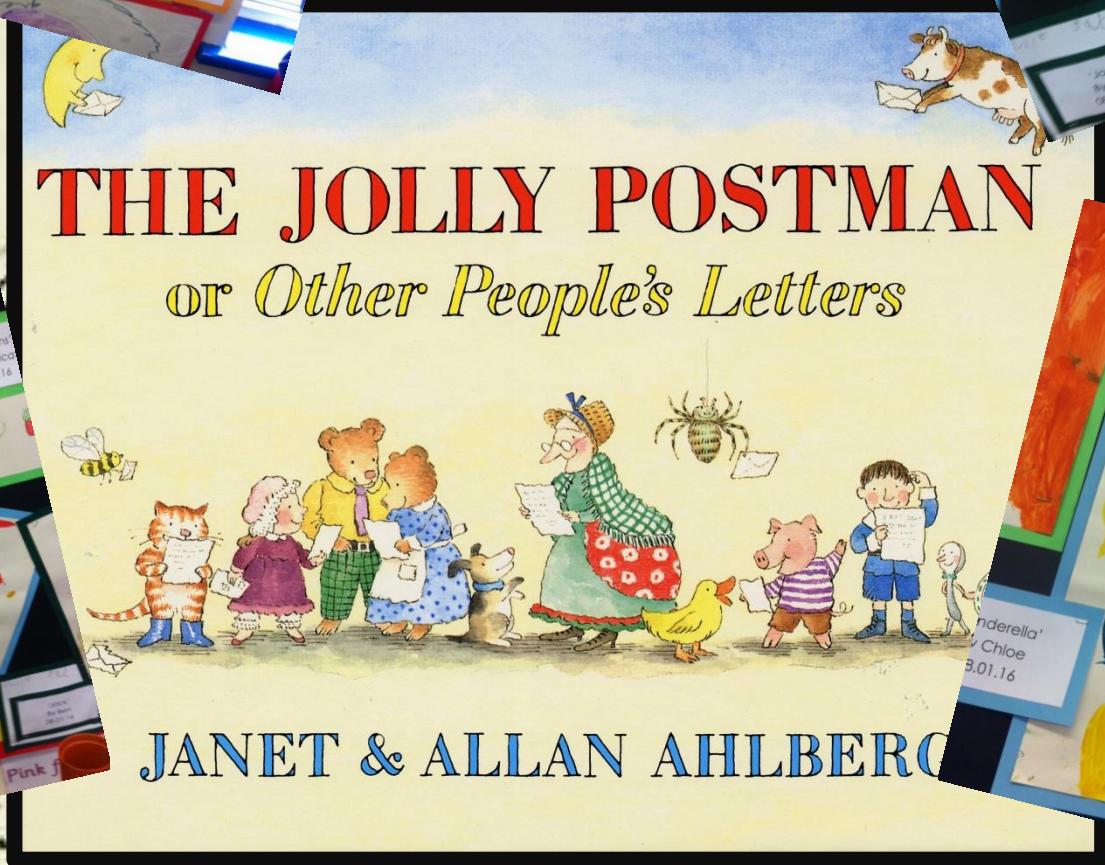
PICCOLLAGE



We green screened the children with their letters, at the King Power Stadium.

PICCOLLAGE





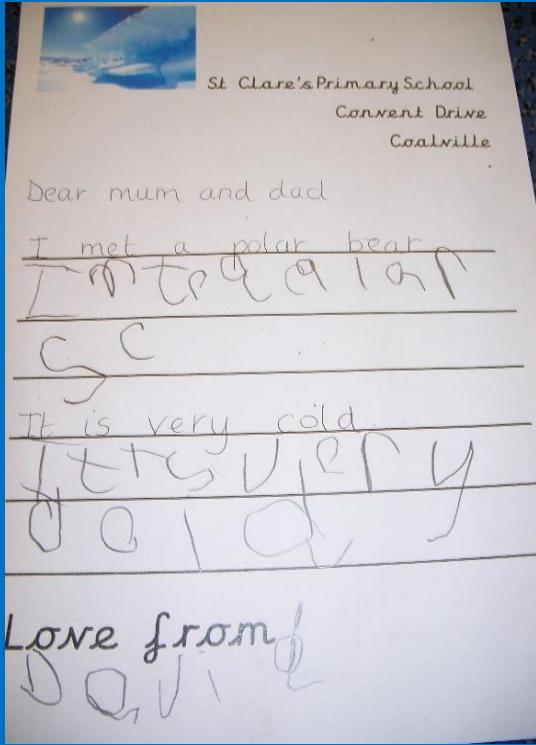
# Books as a starting point

Books are a great starting point for inspiring writing. In the Spring we use The Jolly Postman as our theme. Each week we focused on a different character in the book and their associated story. It provoked lots of story writing, letters to different characters, instructions on how to make porridge and a short piece on our favourite fairy-tale character.



By Becky Lewis

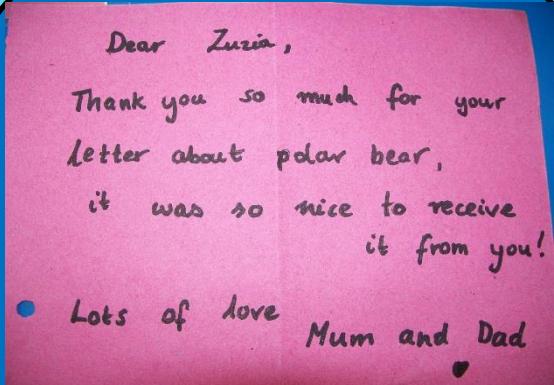
**We wrote to our parents!**



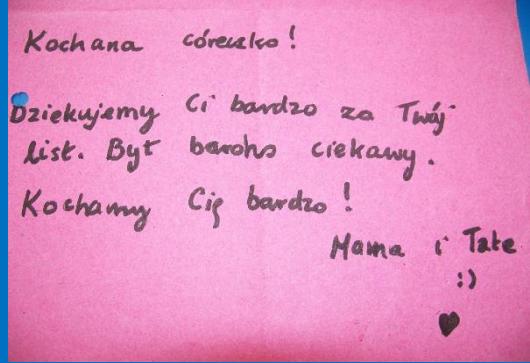
For our topic about Polar lands, we wrote letters to our parents from the North Pole, telling them what it was like and what we had seen. We walked to the post box to send them on their way! Some parents wrote letters back to their children at school, which caused great excitement when they arrived.



**They wrote back to us!**



One parent wrote in both English and Polish!



# Writing at St Clare's

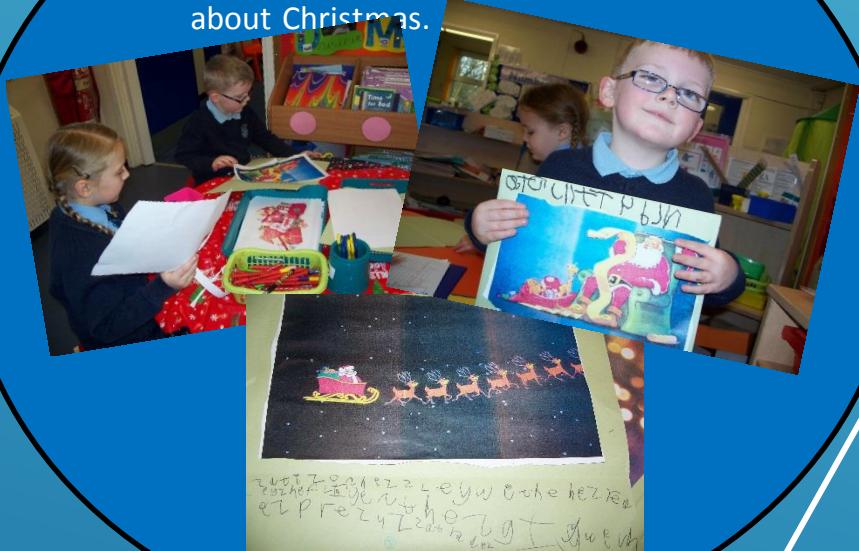
Annette Kerry

A little door appeared in our classroom before Christmas, and The Kindness Elves moved in! They left little notes for the children. They wrote letters back to the Elves.



One night, the dinosaurs took them hostage and the children had to rescue them!

Writing prompts were really useful to encourage the children to write. These were just different pictures about Christmas.



Aliens in Underpants!

A spacecraft landed in our playground, with a letter from Blig!



The class made their own spacecraft, and the wrote about how they had made them and what materials they had used. Some even made models at home and brought them to school.



Brookside  
Primary School



Writing music for  
the ball



Writing lists to mummy's  
and daddy's to bring  
things in for the ball.



Writing with glitter and  
glue making our web  
invites.



Fine motor work before  
writing – rolling snail  
bodies.

# Welcome to the ugly bug ball.



Even the  
teachers  
made  
costumes!!



We made costumes for  
our ball, using coloured  
bin bags and crepe  
paper/glue/feathers/pom  
poms/tissue paper.



We dressed up and  
danced to bug music!

“this is the best day  
ever!!”

# St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy

We walked from school to Brocks Hill for a mini beast hunt. Parents were invited too.



Learning names of mini beasts and ticking off what we find.



What can I find on the tree trunk?



Observing colour, shape, pattern, habitat



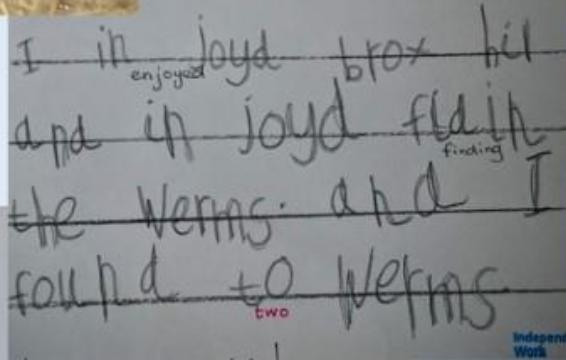
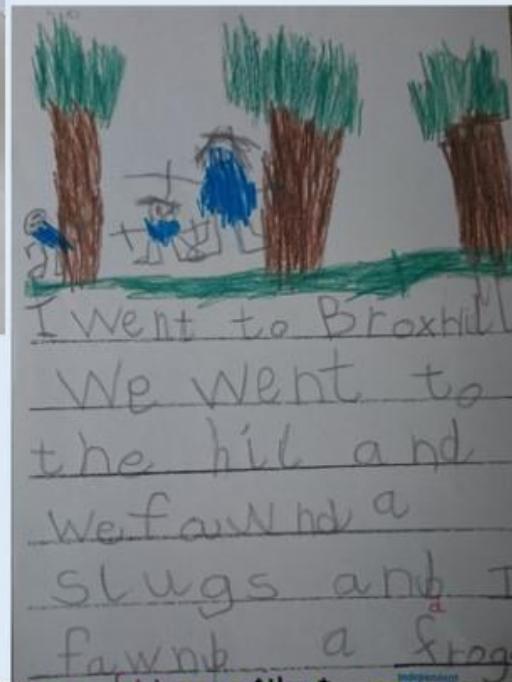
Choosing ways to create our own mini beasts.



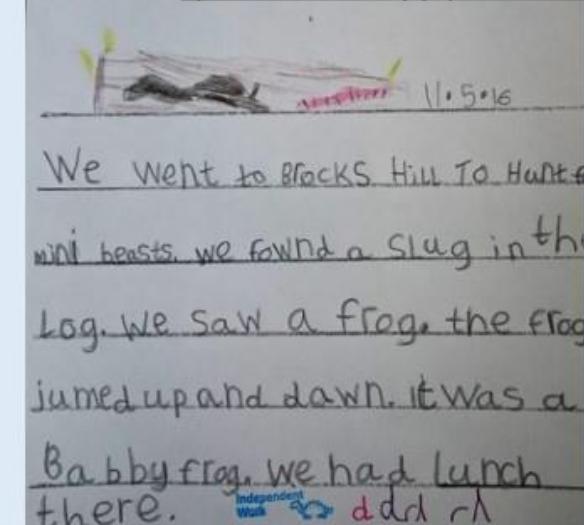
And inspired to show what we made and labelled at school and at home



Talking about how it moves and how many legs it has.

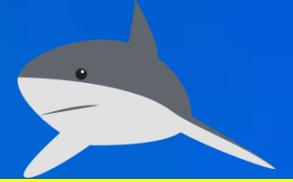


Inspired to write and discover more





# Under the Sea!

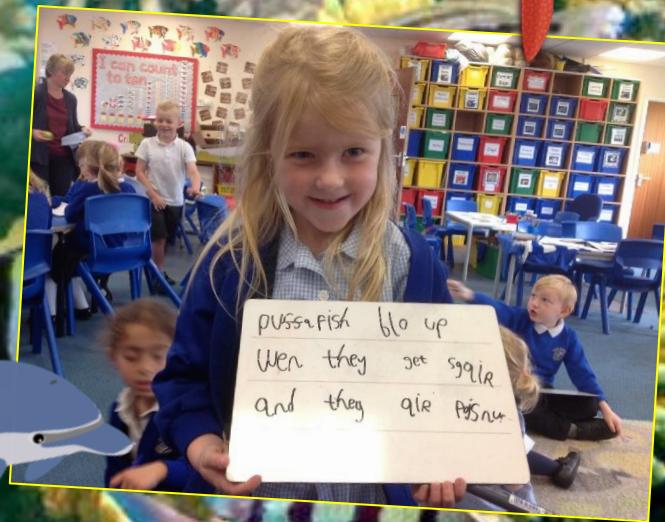


Ideas for inspiring writing: Nicola Hall, Newton Burgoland Primary School.

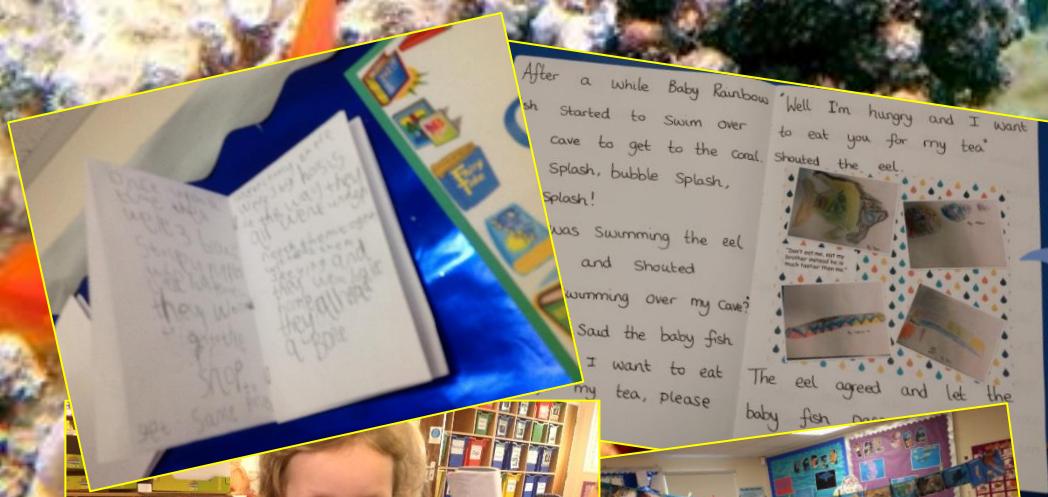


We had a big research day finding out about lots of different sea creatures. We watched a clip of David Attenborough talking about dolphins, used the internet and books and made notes on our clipboards. This made the children feel very important. I then set up a research table with note books for the children to continue their investigations.

We used Pie Corbett's story telling techniques to learn the story of the 3 clever rainbow fish. We then turned the story into a big book for a shared write and the children illustrated it. This allowed the children to see me writing for a purpose. The children then went on to write their own stories in zig zag books.

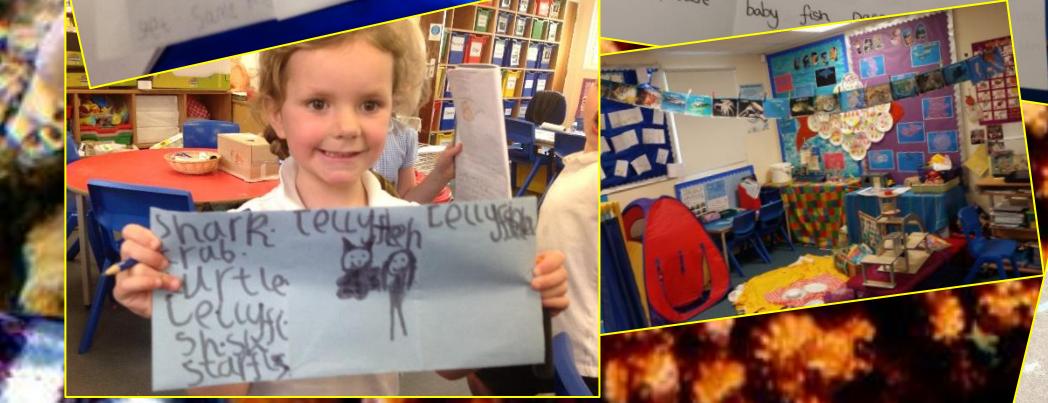


puss-fish blo up  
Wen they see spale  
and they gie fisher



After a while Baby Rainbow  
sh Started to Swim over  
cave to get to the coal.  
Splash, bubble Splash,  
Splash!  
was Swimming the eel  
and Shouted  
swimming over my cave?  
Said the baby fish  
I want to eat  
my tea, please  
Well I'm hungry and I want  
to eat you for my tea.  
Shouted the eel.  
The eel agreed and let the  
baby fish

We made some beautiful junk model sea creatures which inspired the children to make their own models. They were encouraged to write labels to go with them.



After we had finished with our story I left it in the book corner for the children to read. I also added zig zag books to the continuous provision which really inspired independent writing!



Bottesford C of E Primary School  
Darinda Freeman  
EYFS class

## Writing through science investigation.



'Mark making  
opportunities in  
the snow and  
ice tuff spot'

The class received a  
letter from Mr  
Freeze delivered by  
Mrs Wallis the  
Nursery Nurse..

Below are some of  
the children's ideas  
to rescue the Power  
Rangers.

Child's voice,



Dear Ash Class,

I am Mr Freeze. Be afraid.

I am a supervillain and I have  
kidnapped your power rangers.

If you want them back alive you  
are going to have to think of ways  
to save them from their frozen  
blocks.

Ha Ha

You'll never get them back alive!!!!

Thursday 28th APRIL 20  
I think we should put  
them in hot water  
and think we should  
put them outside to  
melt - ✓ A lovely idea!  
★

We could get  
a hairdryer that  
we could melt the ice  
It wont hurt them. ✓ A lovely id  
ELA!  
★

curling irons  
I can melt them  
with a curling iron. ✓  
I

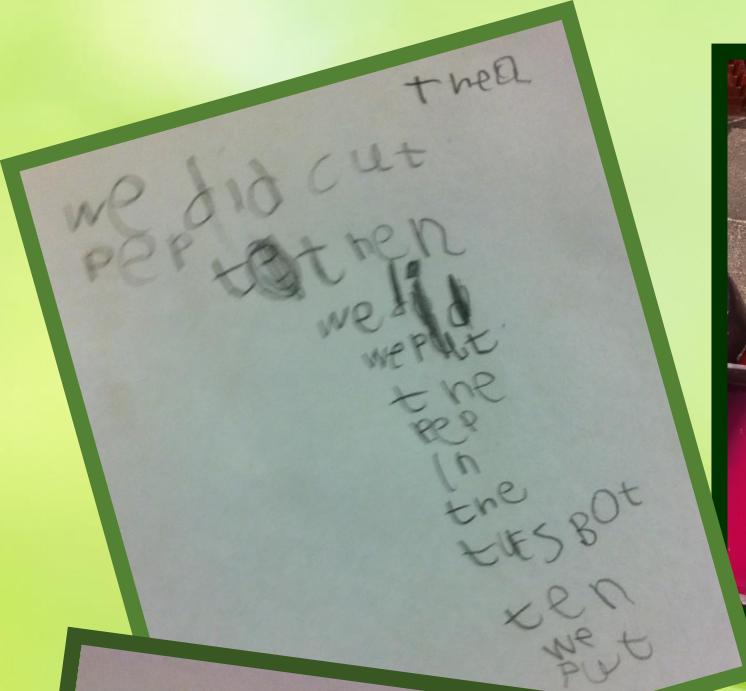
Following on from our topic on jungles, the children had developed an interest in the Amazon Rainforest. They gathered information at home to share with each other and presented it in a range of ways including posters, pictures and books. One of the children wrote 'oxygen' which sparked lots of conversation about why trees are so important. Over the course of a week we had moved from jungles to how we can help our environment. We went on to learn about recycling and how paper is recycled. We gathered the paper wasted by the school for just one day, which filled two bin bags (we have a small school) and wondered how many trees we had to cut down to make this much paper. We thought we could have a go at recycling our own paper!



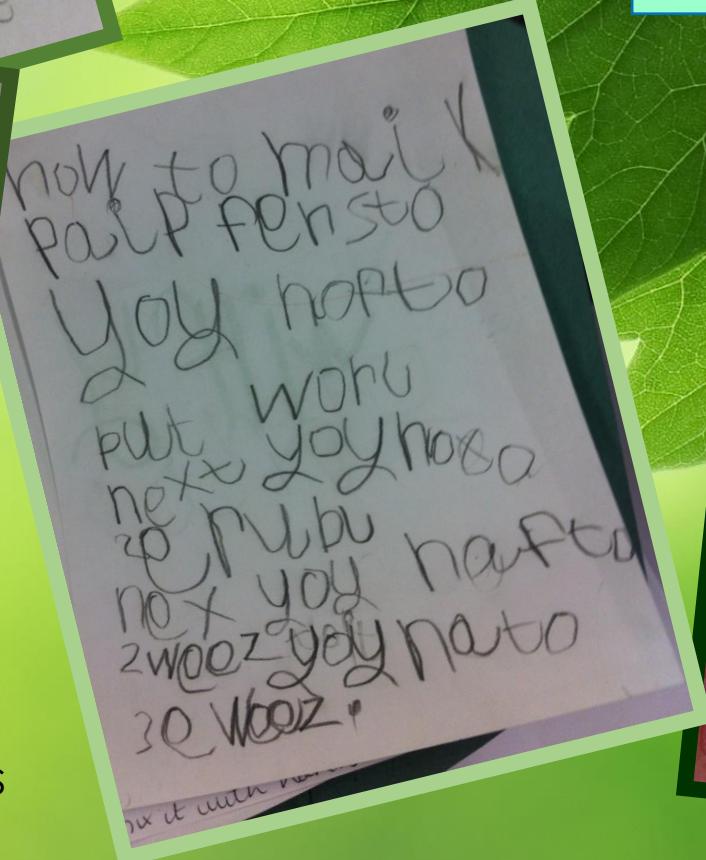
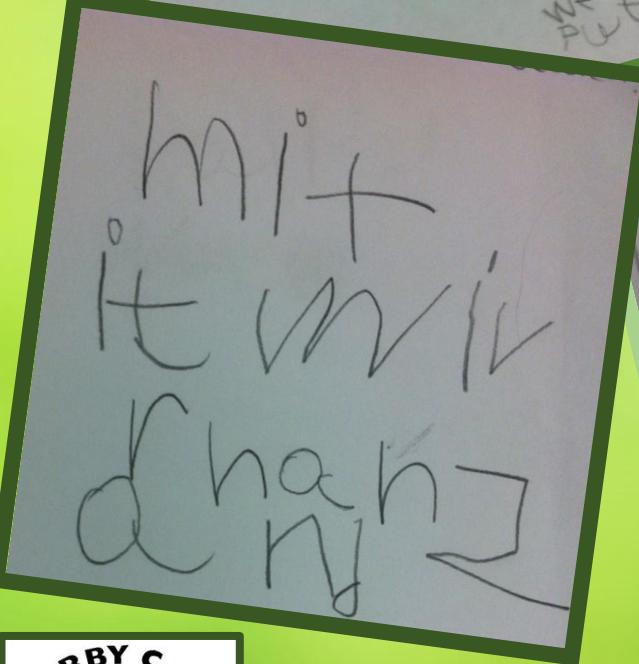
# Recycling

After we had made our paper we challenged the children to write instructions so that the other children in school could make their own recycled paper and save some trees!

We shredded the paper we had saved and put it in buckets of water to soak. The children had a great time squishing the mushy paper in the tough spot, we added food colouring and food essence to the mix. The children had lots to talk about; texture, colour, smell, and the activity supported their large muscle development and helped to strengthen their hands. The children put the paper pulp onto a frame and pressed out the water. They added glitter, petals and lavender before turning it out onto greaseproof paper to dry.



The children were so excited to feel like they were the experts that they took the challenge by the horns and sat outside in the sun with clipboards and wrote their instructions for the rest of the school. They then showed their writing to the class and talked about what it said and how they had made and decorated their paper.



By Becky Lewis

# Using Role-Play to Inspire Writing

At Tugby C of E Primary School

## Jack and the Beanstalk

This is the best day ever!

We had a letter delivered from the school office from Jack.

Jack needed our help! Someone had taken his golden hen...

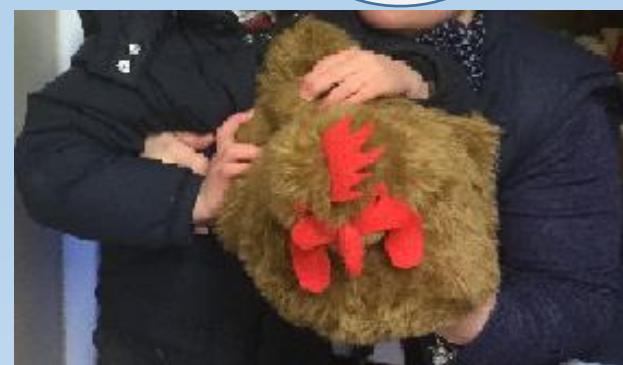
We went around the school looking for clues.

We wrote "missing" posters and put them up around the school.



The whole school helped us to look for more clues during playtime.

Finally we found the golden hen! We wrote letters to Jack or the giant the next day.



Charlotte Bower



# Cowboys Inspiration...

Samantha Macdonald, Warren Hills Primary School.



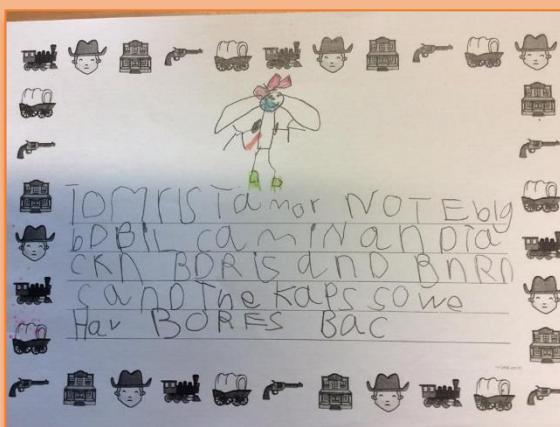
One of the children showed a great interest in the film Toy Story and particularly the character of the female cowgirl Jesse. We decided to do a couple of weeks on the topic of cowboys, which turned into a whole half term of work!



One of the first things we did was create a wagon outside for the children made out of a piece of foam and a table. Old tyres and pans completed the look.



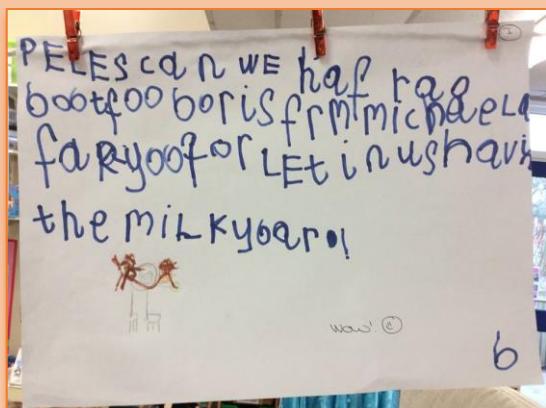
We also made a role play gold mine, camp fire and saloon inside our classroom.



We had a visit from Big Bad Bill who stole our gold and our class teddy bear. The children were outraged and produced some fantastic independent writing asking Bill to return our things!



We made horse hand prints.



Children's voice...  
'This is the best topic ever' D  
'Look, I have made a cactus!' H  
'Big Bad Bill should change his ways!' O



# Dinosaur Discovery

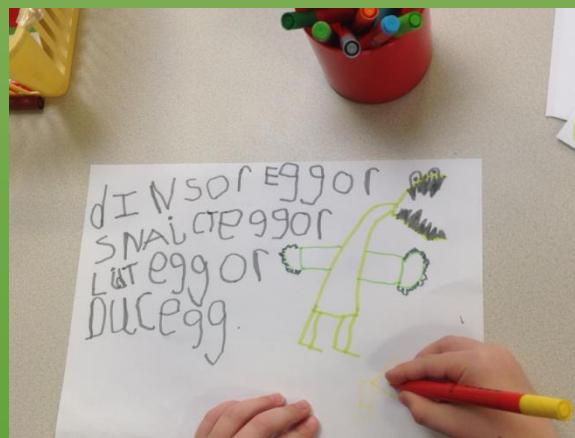


Samantha Nutt-Desford Community Primary School

It began with two children discovering mystery eggs in our outside area. They then gathered both classes to inform them.

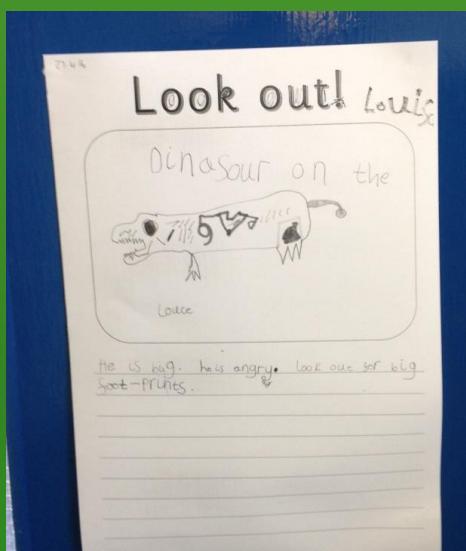
We later discovered more...

What could it be? How did they get here? What's inside?



The children began to predict what was inside.

A few days later the children arrived to find something had happened in the classroom. Parents came in to class find out why there was red tape everywhere...



## An Egg had hatched!!!

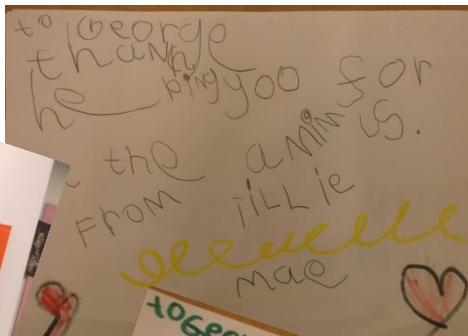
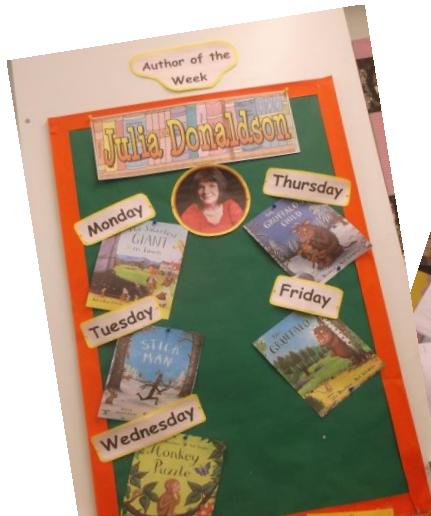
We then watched a 'CCTV' clip using the FXGuru app and discovered that that a T-Rex had in fact hatched. The children decided to write posters and we displayed them all around school in order to warn others.

Other writing opportunities that developed: Responding to a letter from the T-Rex, creating our own mini dinosaur books, designing and writing about a new dinosaur friend.

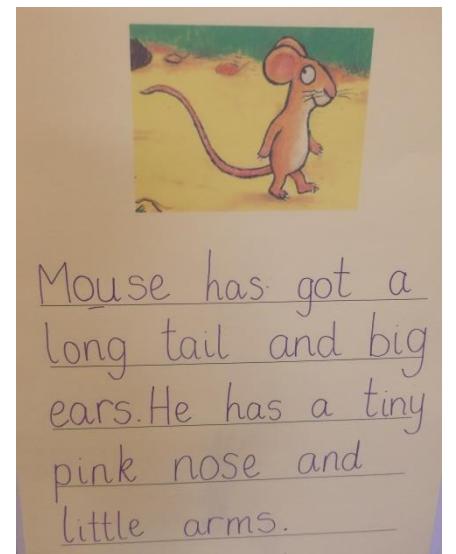
School today was absolutely amazing!

# Writing Provocations

## Author of the week



Julia Donaldson stories were used to inspire the children.



Post-its were used as a less threatening encouragement for writing

They wrote letters to George the giant thanking him for his kindness!

The children ended the week with 'The Gruffalo'. They like my story the most.

They wrote descriptive sentences about me, looking carefully at my physical features.



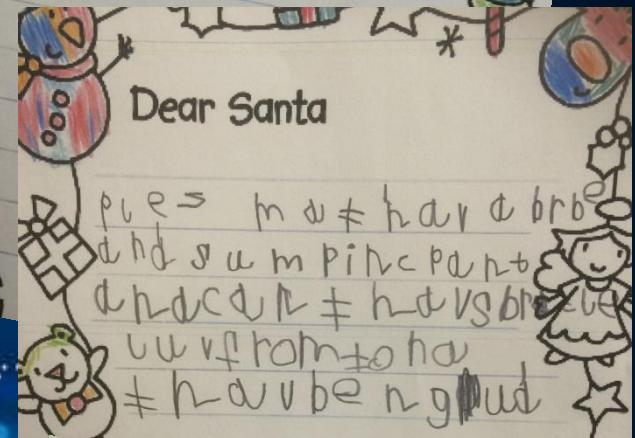
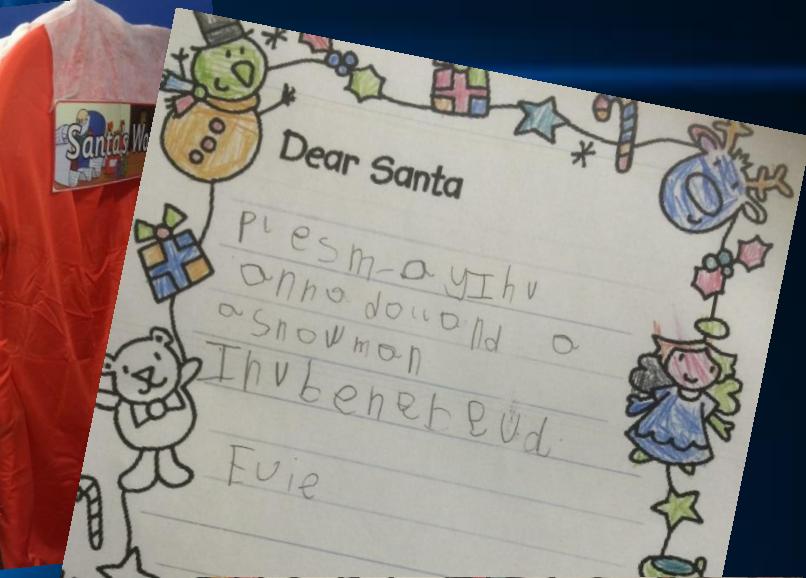
Children used descriptive language

Children wrote independently

Children were eager to share their ideas

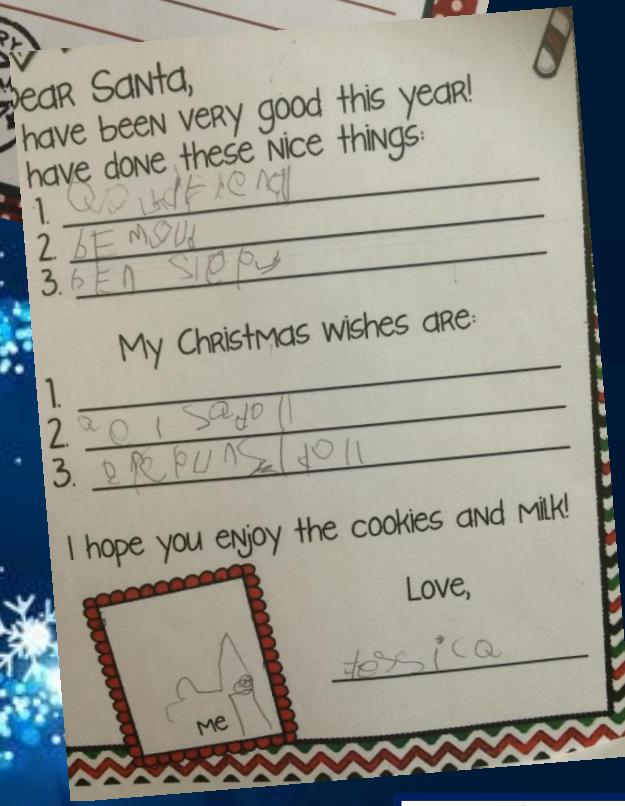
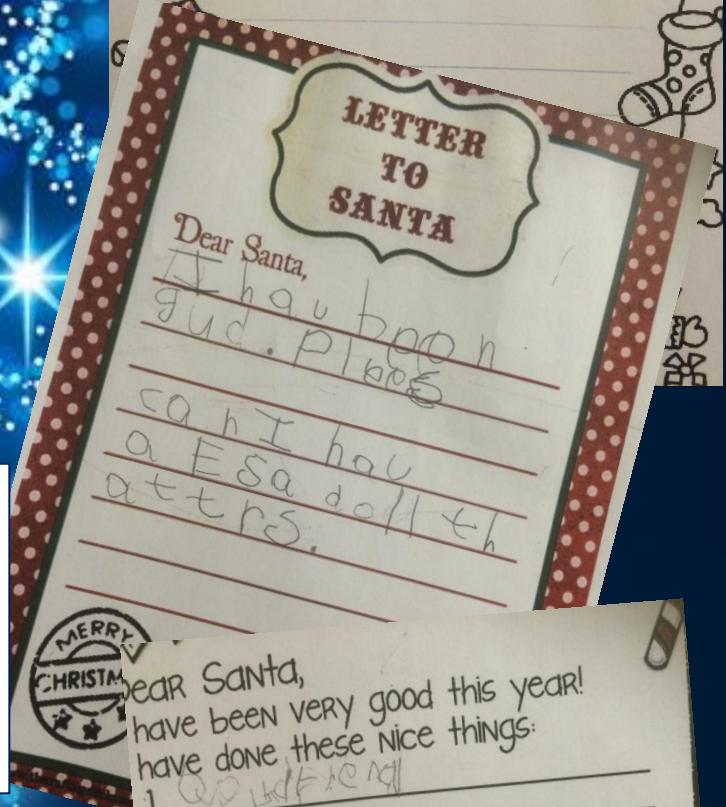
Children were keen to see which story was next

Whitwick Saint John the Baptist C of E Primary  
Holly Hutchinson



At Christmas we filled the classroom with writing provocation to inspire all the children to pick up a pencil. We had a Christmas post office with a range of Christmas cards, diaries, parcels, stamps and writing tools. The children took great pride in writing cards for each other and the adults.

# Christmas Provocation



We also created a 'Santa's Workshop' with a place to design toys to build in the craft area. There was a tool bench for role play and a wrapping area to wrap the toys they made.

By Becky Lewis



What are we going to learn about?

Inspirational starter

# Jungle adventures! at Stathern Primary school



TO START OUR NEW TOPIC, WE HAD TO BE DETECTIVES TO SEARCH CLUES IN THE GARDEN TO DISCOVER WHAT OUR NEW TOPIC WAS. THEN WE DREW MIND MAP TO ESTABLISH WHAT WE ALREADY KNEW ABOUT THE JUNGLE.

Community



The local vet came to visit our class. The children had written some questions to ask him prior to the visit. As you can see we had some fun! We also wrote thank you cards.

That's fun!

Parents involvement



AS A GRAND FINALE TO OUR 'JUNGLE' TOPIC, WE INVITED OUR PARENTS FOR SOME JUNGLE BUSH TUCKER TRIALS!

I want to be a vet!



I'M A PARENT, GET ME OUT OF HERE!

CHILDREN WROTE THE INVITATIONS, LABELS AND SIGNS. PARENTS HAD TO FACE 9 CHALLENGES AND CHILDREN KEPT TRACK OF THE POINTS ON THE SCORESHEET (ON CLIPBOARDS!)

A QUEEN AND A KING OF THE JUNGLE WERE CROWNED!



Nathalie Marksman

PICCOLLAGE

Bottesford C of E Primary School  
Darinda Freeman  
EYFS class

## Starting with a story.



The class listened to the rhymes in 'Stomp Chomp ,Big Roars! Here Comes the Dinosaurs.' We used the story to develop rhythm in a PD session.

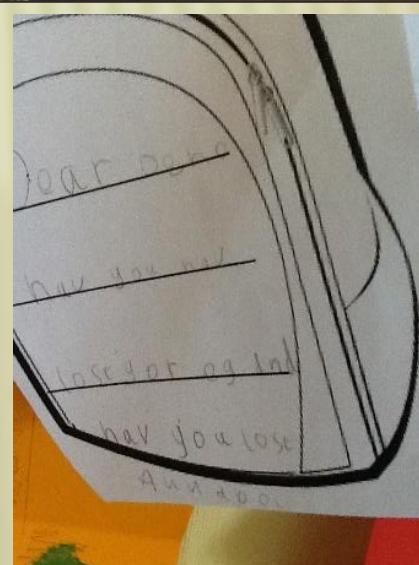
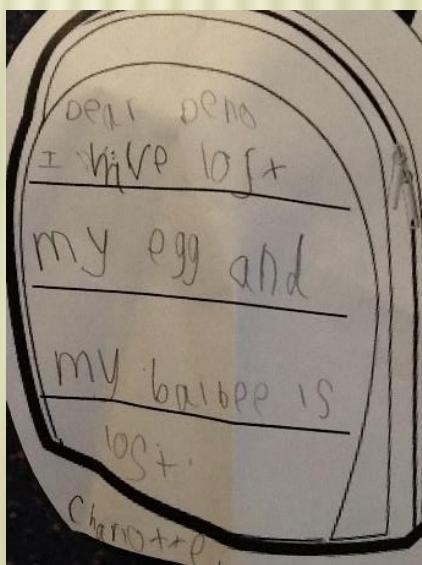


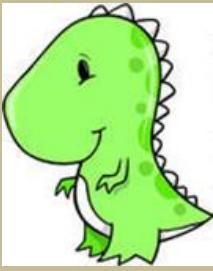
The children discovered a strange egg in the playground – They were then shown some CCTV (video) footage of a dinosaur  
'What was it doing in the playground ? They suggested it had lost the egg. The children then wrote letters to the dinosaur telling her they had found her egg. They pinned them to a line for the dinosaur to read when she visited again.

We adapted the 'Bear Hunt' story book and changed it to 'Were going on a dinosaur hunt.' A group of children made their own 'Tuff spot' to represent the different areas of the dinosaur land. Later they wrote labels for this.



Children's Voice -  
Independent  
writing!

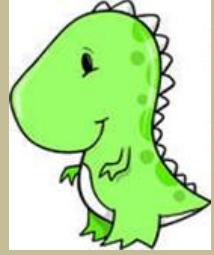




# Dinosaurs!

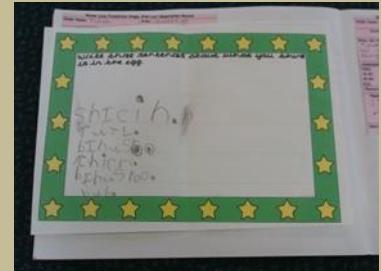
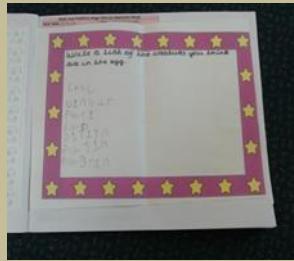
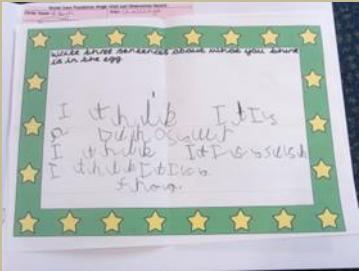
## Water Leys Primary School

### Jess Gilbride



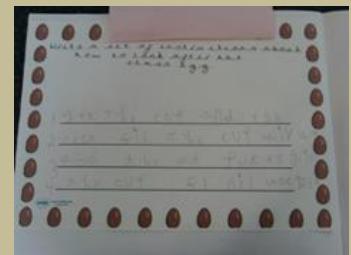
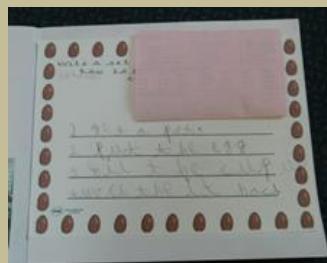
#### Dinosaur Topic

We did a fantastic topic on Dinosaurs! At the end of the week before we started our topic, we found an unidentified egg in our outside area that we stumbled upon. With the egg was a letter from the eggs mummy, telling us that she could not look after it and she wanted us to. The children were very excited to watch it grow and hatch. Before it hatched, the children enjoyed writing lists and sentences in our challenge area about what creatures they thought would hatch out of it.



#### Instructions

After the children had written about what creatures they thought might be in the egg, we had another letter from the eggs mummy with a set of instructions to follow to care for the egg. We put Talk for Writing actions with the instructions to help the children write their own set in the challenge area.



#### The egg hatched!

Three days after we had followed our given instructions of putting the egg into water, our class dinosaur was born! He hatched out of the egg and our class was quick to name him Classoneosaurus after our class name; Class One. We then began to send home Classoneosaurus each night with one lucky child for them to write a diary about the adventures they went on with him. We have had lots of writing in his diary and pictures that the children have made for him. The children have initiated their own writing by writing cards and messages and drawing him pictures that they then put with him in his bed.



# Secret Party Planning..

Our topic was jobs and it also happened to be our two teaching assistants birthdays! The children wanted to make the day special for them, so together we came up with the idea of having a party!



The children were busy typing cards. The more able wrote their own personalised birthday message while the less able focused on practising their typing skills.



Parents donated food and the children wrote labels for it.

We read instructions for decorating a biscuit, then made them for the party. The next week we wrote instructions for decorating biscuits, so that our class Teddy Sam could also make them!

We wrote party invitations to each other.

We decorated the hall with paper loops focusing on 2-3 repeated patterns.

We were lucky to have a guest singer - who was one of the children's grandad. He played the trumpet to children's songs, such as head shoulders knees and toes and let it go! The children had a fantastic time singing and dancing!

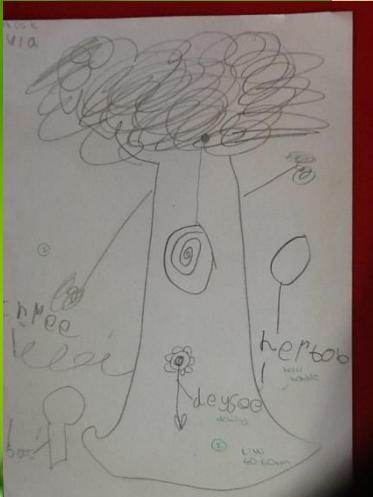


Swallowdale Primary School  
Jenny Cross



# Outdoor Exploration at Heather Primary School!

Every Wednesday is now Wellies Wednesday at Heather Foundation Stage. We have been busy in our newly organised garden area, planting and learning to care for the plants. Children have enjoyed having time to explore the garden and pond area using their senses. They have been making rubbings on different surfaces and have been keen to draw and label things they can see and hear.



An example of an independent, labelled drawing.



Drawings and rubbings in the garden



Plants and flowers for the butterflies.



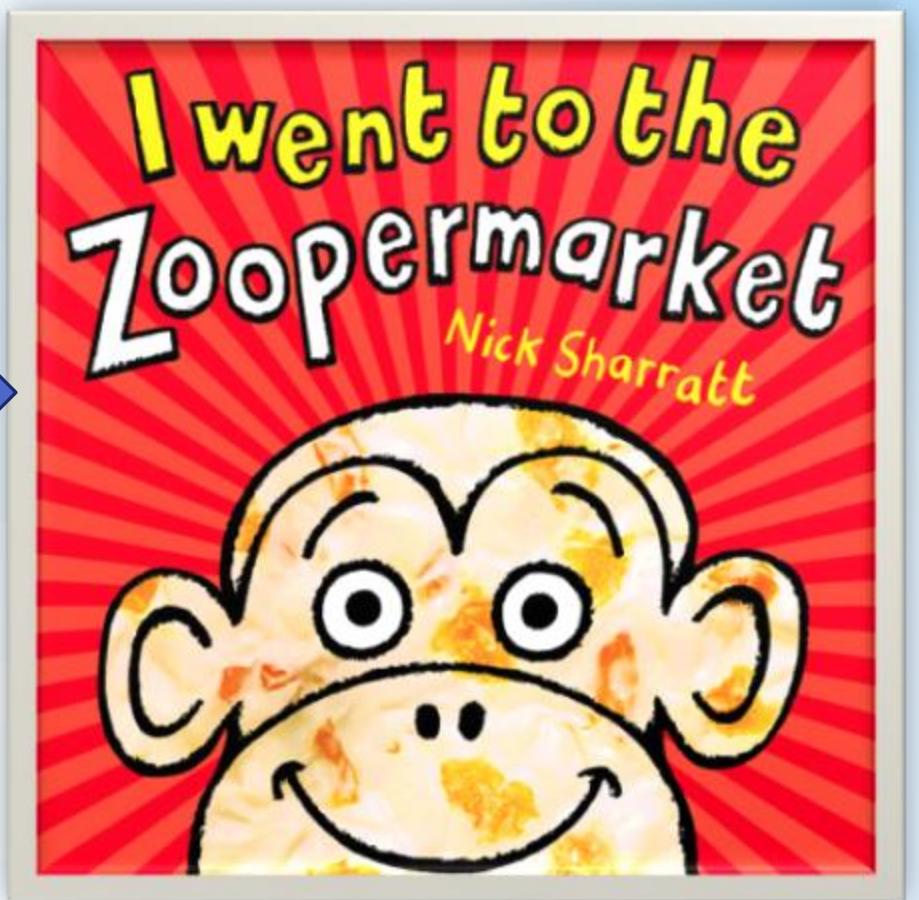
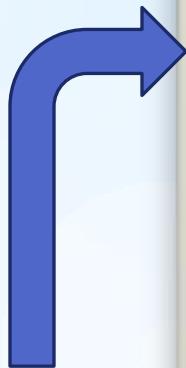
Releasing the butterflies.

To further support childrens' understanding of a caterpillar's lifecycle, linked in with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* we had caterpillars in our classroom. The children enjoyed watching their progress each day; drawing pictures and writing about ways to care for them. They came up with their own names for the butterflies. They then enjoyed releasing them outside but were sad to say goodbye!

Holly Turner



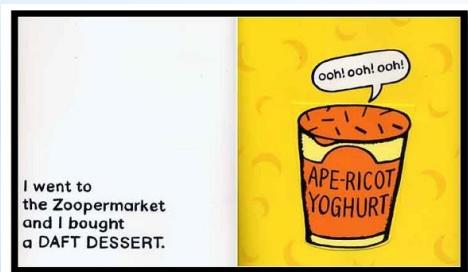
Let's get out into  
the Community!  
Lets Involve  
Parents !  
Let's go with the  
children's  
interests!



One day a child in my class asked me to read this book at the end of a school day. He then said "This my favourite favourite book!". As a reluctant writer I then decided to use this as a starting point for my next literacy unit.

*The children enjoyed doing a range of activities around the book . This included writing shopping lists, making up their own animal foods and writing their own version of the story. We all worked together to make our own "Zoopermarket" in our Classroom.*

*The children invited their parents on trip to our local "Zoopermarket" by writing invitations.*



*On our trip the children has to locate a number of food from the shop. A little bit like " supermarket Sweep". They also has to write a shopping list for other staff in school and buy the items.*

*We also visited the library and heard a few stories from the lovely librarian.*

*A great day, enjoyed by all!*



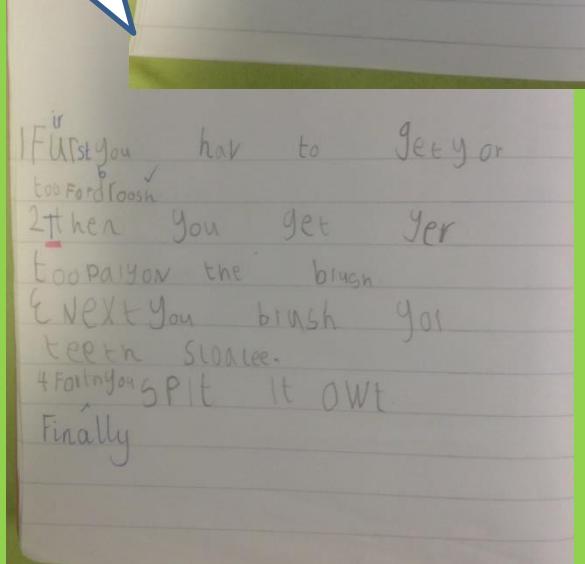
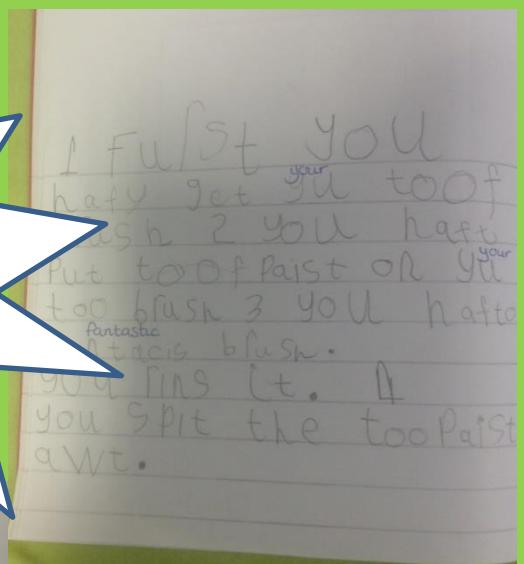
\*  
Katie Sutton  
Sheepy Magna C of E Primary School



**WHO'S AFRAID OF THE BIG BAD WOLF ?!?!**



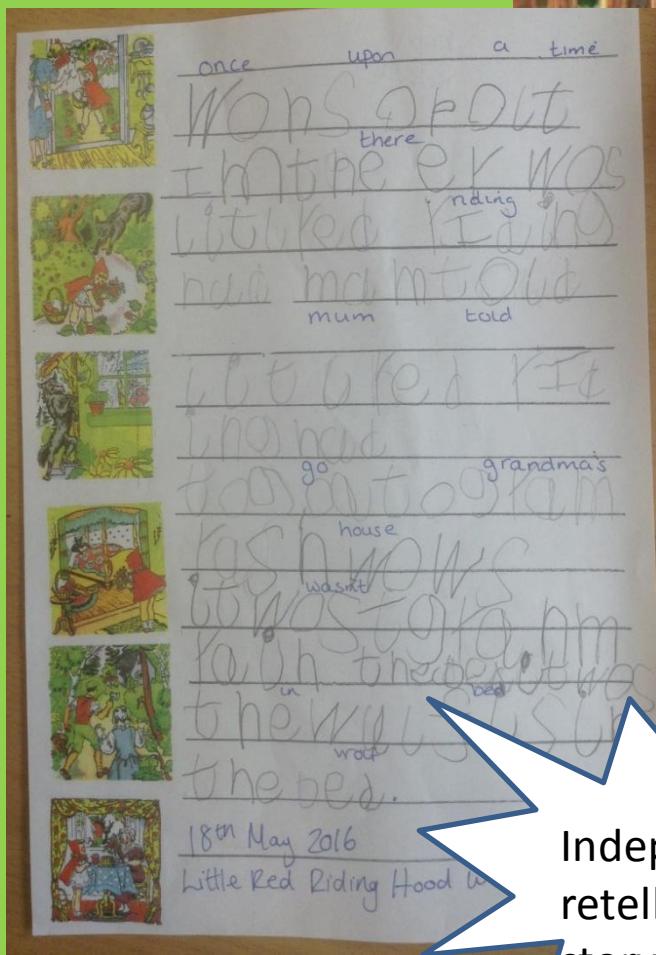
We wrote instructions to the wolf- how to brush his teeth!



Drama- role playing the story in small groups



As a part of our 'Once Upon A Time' topic, we focused on Little Red Riding Hood for a week. The children really enjoyed hearing and watching different versions of the story and produced some fantastic writing.



Independent retelling of the story writing!



We moved in different ways- like the wolf, grandma etc.

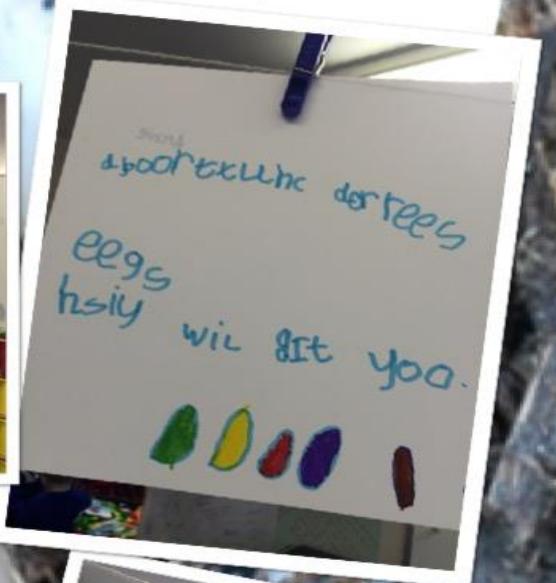
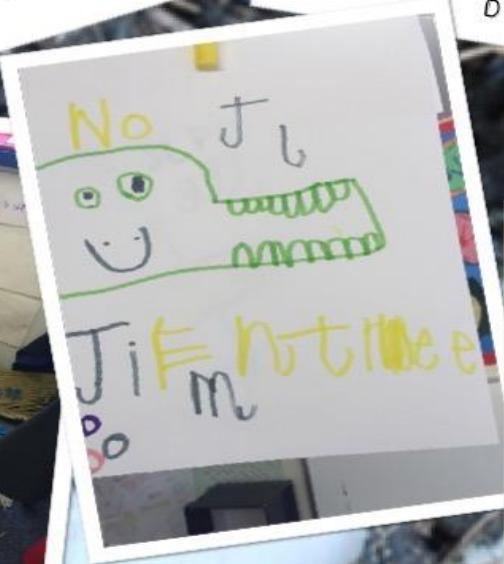


CHILD INITIATED WRITING  
AT ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC  
VOLUNTARY ACADEMY.

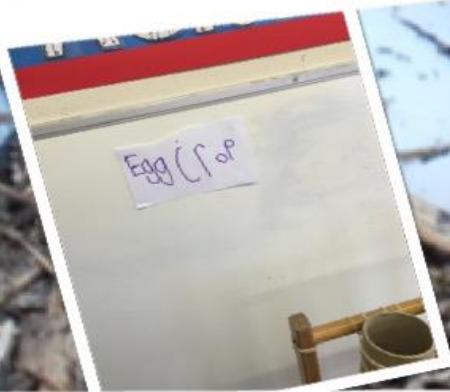
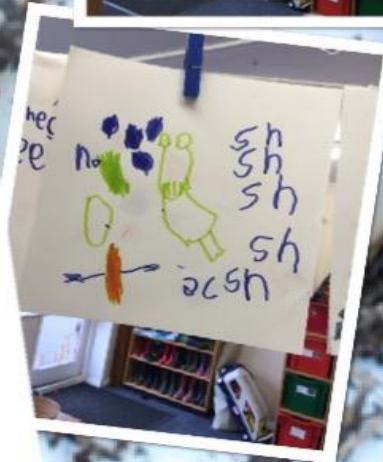
THE CLASS BUILT AN 'EGG  
FACTORY' IN THEIR ROLE  
PLAY AREA AND USING AN  
IPAD RESEARCHED WHAT A  
CROCODILE NEST WOULD  
LOOK LIKE.  
IMAGINE THEIR SURPRISE  
WHEN THE NEXT MORNING  
DOREEN WAS SAT ON THE  
NEST!

WE HAVE USED A CROCODILE PUPPET ALL  
YEAR AS A CLASS PET. THE CHILDREN HAVE  
BECOME PARTICULARLY FOND OF DOREEN  
THIS YEAR AND INCLUDE HER IN THEIR  
PLAY.

DURING OUR EGG TOPIC IN THE SPRING  
TERM THE CHILDREN RESEARCHED WHICH  
ANIMALS LAID EGGS. THEY REALLY WANTED  
DOREEN TO BUILD A NEST...



THIS STIMULUS PROMPTED LOTS OF  
WRITING AND CRAFT IDEAS FROM THE  
CHILDREN. THEY MADE POSTERS, TO  
WARN VISITORS AND PARENTS THAT  
DOREEN WAS ON HER NEST AND LIKELY  
TO BE A BIT GRUMPY. THEY  
SPECULATED ON WHAT SEX THE BABY  
CROCODILES WOULD BE (THEY FOUND  
OUT THAT TEMPERATURE DECIDED  
WHETHER THE OFFSPRING WERE MALE  
OR FEMALE) AND CAME UP WITH NAMES  
FOR ALL THE BABIES.



ON THE LAST DAY OF TERM DOREEN SHOWED SIGNS (SHE WROTE THEM A  
NOTE TOO) THAT THE EGGS WERE GOING TO HATCH. THE CHILDREN MADE  
PAPER EGGS AND FOOD TO TEMPT HER OFF HER NEST AND THEN  
DISCOVERED THAT DOREEN HAD LABELLED EACH EGGS WITH THEIR NAMES.  
MASSIVE SQUEALS OF DELIGHT WHEN THEY WERE TOLD  
KEEP ONE OF DOREEN'S BABIES!

**With special thanks to the reception teachers and children of:**

- Warren Hills Primary School
- Gaddesby Primary School
- Ellistown Primary School
- Tugby C of E Primary School
- Stathern Primary School
- Brooks Hill Primary School
- Highcliffe Primary School
- Heather Primary School
- Newtown Burgoland Primary School
- Bottesford C of E Primary School
- Whitwick, St John the Baptist C of E Primary
- Saint John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy
- St Clares Primary School
- Brookside Primary School
- Moira Primary School
- Desford Community Primary School
- Water Leys Primary School
- Townsland C of E Primary Academy
- Old Dalby Primary School
- Swallowdale Primary School
- Oakthorpe Primary School
- Highgate Community Primary School
- Glenfield Primary School
- Sheepy Magna C of E primary School
- Harby C of E Primary School
- St Joseph Catholic Voluntary Academy