Weekly Learning Update

6th March 2026

Nursery

It has been a fantastic week in Nursery!

The children looked fantastic in their outfits for World Book Day on Thursday - they made such a brilliant effort and really enjoyed the day! We also enjoyed the opportunity of having the author Jenny McLaughlan visit the Nursery children this week.

For some of our children, a 12 weeks course of Balanceability began last Friday. This is an opportunity for children to gain confidence and coordination on balance bikes with a view to develop the skills to be able to navigate a pedal bike.

In Phonics, we have been focusing on the concept of rhyme and rhythm. The children have enjoyed exploring a range of songs and stories to identify the pace of stories and the flow of speech. The children have also enjoyed exploring rhyming words, thinking about the way the beginning sounds within a word can be different, but if the middle and end sounds are the same, the words will rhyme.

Our focus within Maths this week has been to explore numerical quantity within 5. Each day, the children have been working in small groups to explore what each number looks like when thinking about a quantity. They have enjoyed going on quantity hunts within the classroom and even used mirrors to explore how many of certain facial features they have!

To celebrate World Book Day, this week's learning has been themed to support learning about a range of books by the author, Julia Donaldson. The children have enjoyed exploring water play with Tiddler, exploring materials through making their own Stick Man as well potion making with Room on the Broom, to name but a few!

Reception (King Class and Parks Class)

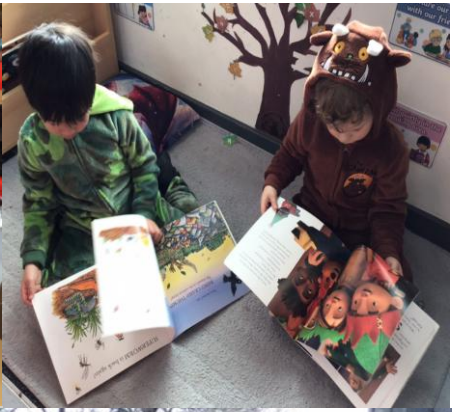
We have had a wonderful week in Reception!

On Monday, we spent the day exploring Warwick castle. The castle offered a wonderful experience complete with the birds of prey show, the archer demonstration, a tour of the great hall and an encounter with a well-known dragon.

We used our experience of the trip to write a recount. The children were introduced to using time connectives in their writing.

On Thursday, we celebrated World Book Day. It was great to see some amazing costumes. The day was spent sharing our favourite stories across year groups, completing the masked reader quiz and creating our own book tokens, displaying images of places we loved to read books.

This week, we continued our learning of addition by counting on. This requires the children to hold a number in their head and count on another amount to find the total. This concept combines counting on from a given number with the circle method.



Year 1 (Bell Class and Windsor Class)

It's been another busy and exciting week in Year One, filled with wonderful learning and special events.

In English, we continued exploring *'The Sea Saw' by Tom Percival*, focusing on the difference between questions and statements. The children answered story-based questions and used adjectives to describe key items from the book in well-structured sentences.

This week in Maths, the children continued working with numbers up to 50, using Base 10 equipment to make groups of ten and add single-digit numbers. They also practised using part-whole and bar models to partition numbers and showed a strong understanding of tens and ones, confidently comparing two-digit numbers.

Our science investigation was inspired by 'The Three Little Pigs', as we explored which materials make the strongest house. The children worked brilliantly in teams to build straw, stick and LEGO brick houses, making predictions, testing them and explaining their results using great scientific reasoning.

On Tuesday, the whole school enjoyed a fantastic visit from author Jenny McLachlan, who spoke about her book *'The Land of Roar'*. The children were captivated by her stories and some even had the chance to dress up and act out scenes. It was wonderful to see how inspired they were after meeting a real author and learning how imagination can spark their own adventures.

We rounded off the week with a brilliant World Book Day on Thursday. The children looked amazing in their costumes and threw themselves into the activities, including designing their own book vouchers for a competition and sharing stories with Year 3 reading buddies. Their enthusiasm and love of books shone throughout the day.

The children have had a fantastic week and should be very proud of their hard work and creativity. We are looking forward to even more exciting learning ahead!

Year 2 (Braille Class and Kerr Class)

We have had a very fun and very busy week in Year 2! It has been a joy to celebrate the world of reading this week. First with a visit from Jenny McLachlan on Tuesday – we really enjoyed getting absorbed into her story telling world and meeting her dragon. Then, we all had a great day on Thursday for World Book Day, with lots of activities designed to inspire us to read more.

In English this week, we continued our learning linked to 'I love books' by Mariajo Ilustrajo. We used expanded noun phrases and lists to add more details about the settings we designed last week. We have also story map planned for some poetry were are going to write next week.

In Maths, we have focused this week on the 5 times table. We have looked at different representations of this times table and applied our knowledge to create fact families. To support your child at home, they can practise times tables at home using websites like Hit the Button or Timestables.co.uk. In Year 2, we primarily focus on the 2s, 5s and 10s.

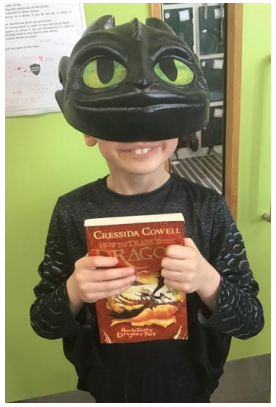
In Science, we continued our learning on life cycles, this time looking at the Life Cycle of a chicken. We learnt about what happens at each stage of the life cycle then used playdough and whiteboard pen to present the information we had learnt.

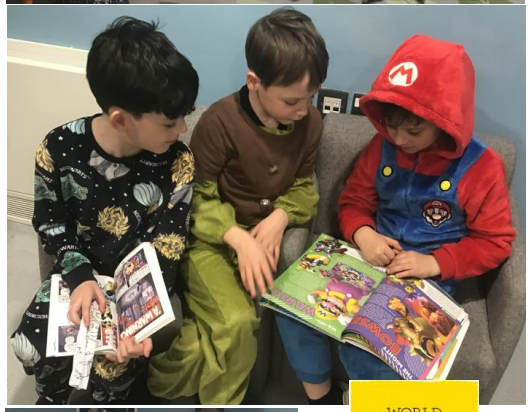
In History, we explored who William Webb Ellis is and learnt about how he invented rugby when he was school. It was fascinating to discover the links to our local area.

In RE, we discussed how sacred texts and important people, like Jesus and Guru Nanak, are inspirational to people with Christian or Sikh worldviews. We explored how holy books show this and what makes those people important.

Year 3 (Malala Class and Anning Class)

What a fantastic week we've had in Year 3! We celebrated the joy of reading with World Book Day and an exciting author visit from Jenny McLachlan, enjoying so many fun and inspiring activities. The children loved dressing up as their favourite characters or in their pyjamas, sharing stories with each other and trying to guess the mystery members of staff in the Masked Reader. We also visited the library, took part in a live author workshop to write our own stories and enjoyed guessing the book references in an illustration. On top of all that, the children had the chance to be creative in a competition to design their own National Book token.





WORLD BOOK DAY

Amongst the fun and excitement, the children have also engaged in lots of amazing learning across the curriculum. In Maths, we have been exploring fractions. The children have been recognising and representing unit fractions, as well as comparing and ordering them with growing confidence.

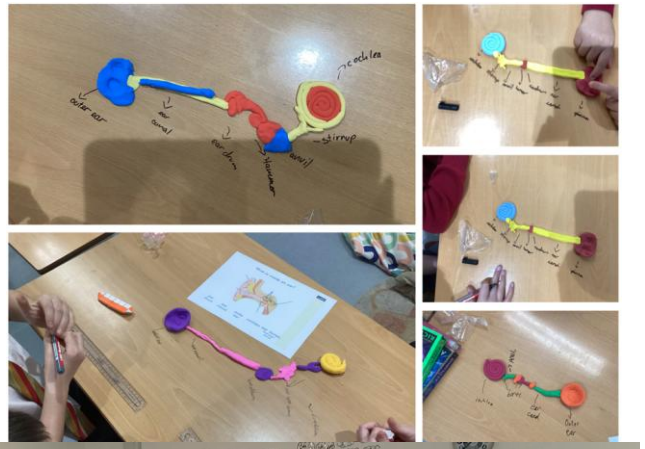
In English, our focus has been on the present perfect tense as part of our persuasive writing unit. The children have been creating persuasive texts inspired by How to Train Your Dragon, practising how to engage and convince their readers.

In History, we travelled back in time to learn about the Wars of the Roses, exploring the key events and understanding how this period shaped England's history.

In RE, we discussed whether reconciliation can be about more than just moving past conflict, focusing on the Coventry Sacred Space, a special part of the city where people from many different countries first settled in Coventry many years ago. We watched a recreation imagining what life was like for a Sikh couple arriving in Coventry in 1978, reflecting on how they might have been feeling.

It's been a really special week! A reminder that Anning's Celebration Worship is next **Friday 13th March at 10:15am.** We hope to see you there!

Year 4 (Tagore Class and Turing Class)



During our English work this week, we formalised our planning and ideas so that we could begin to structure our persuasive speech and think about how we can impact our audience in the greatest way possible. We have carefully plotted out how we will weave in our rhetorical questions alongside all of the emotive language that should guide the Britons to an historical rebellion.

During Maths this week, we have made connections between our previous learning of mixed numbers and how they are related to improper fractions. We then used this new knowledge to compare and order mixed fractions in a variety of ways.

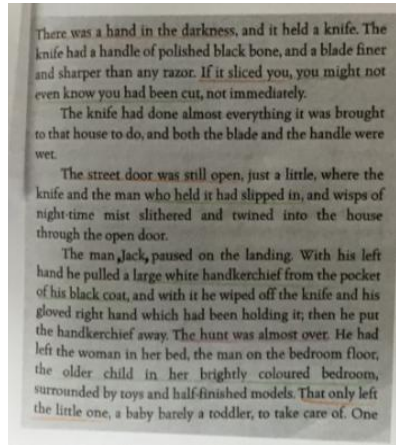
We were very practical in our Science learning this week as we used modelling clay to create a model of how sound is heard by the human ear. This allowed us to utilise our understanding of how sound is created by vibrations and how they travel through the air, along our ear canal and eventually interpreted by our brain.

We were very fortunate this week as we were able to world book day timed with a visit from Jenny McLachlan. She told us all about her creative journey all the way from school to now! She talked about all of the skills needed to write, illustrate and create whole universes! We also had a workshop where we began to create our own story beginning with the island it all takes place on.

Well done on another great week!

Year 5 (Attenborough Class and Rauf Class)

In English, the children have been preparing to write their own suspense narratives. They explored key features of suspense writing and practised the skills needed to build tension. We focused on using the five senses to describe a scene effectively and discussed how each feature influences the reader's experience.


There was a hand in the darkness, and it held a knife. The knife had a handle of polished black bone, and a blade finer and sharper than any razor. If it sliced you, you might not even know you had been cut, not immediately.

The knife had done almost everything it was brought to that house to do, and both the blade and the handle were wet.

The street door was still open, just a little, where the knife and the man who held it had slipped in, and wisps of night-time mist slithered and twined into the house through the open door.

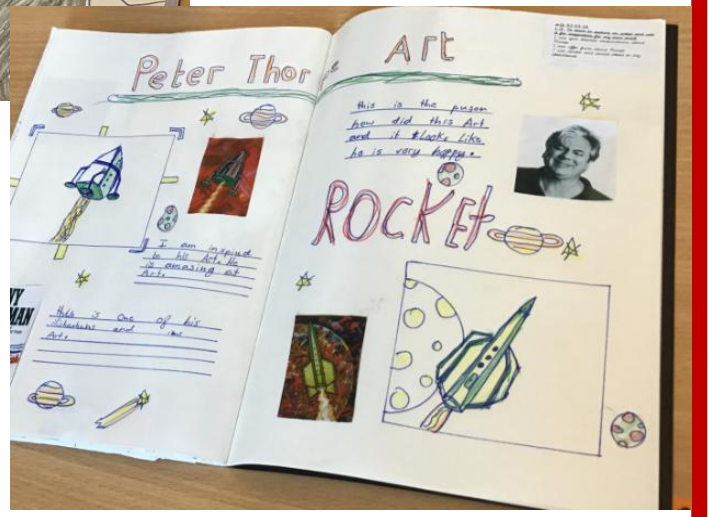
The man Jack, paused on the landing. With his left hand he pulled a large white handkerchief from the pocket of his black coat, and with it he wiped off the knife and his gloved right hand which had been holding it; then he put the handkerchief away. The hunt was almost over. He had left the woman in her bed, the man on the bedroom floor, the older child in her brightly coloured bedroom, surrounded by toys and half-finished models. That only left the little one, a baby barely a toddler, to take care of. One

In Maths, we continued our work on decimals, moving on to thousandths. The children learned how thousandths appear on a place value chart and how to represent them as both fractions and decimals. We are now beginning to order and compare decimals, using the knowledge built over the last few weeks.

In Science, our lesson introduced the children to how planets orbit the Sun. They used key vocabulary such as *rotation* and *axis* to help explain these movements.

In Geography, the children learned how to use four-figure grid references to locate places on a map. They also explored Ordnance Survey maps and studied the symbols used on them.

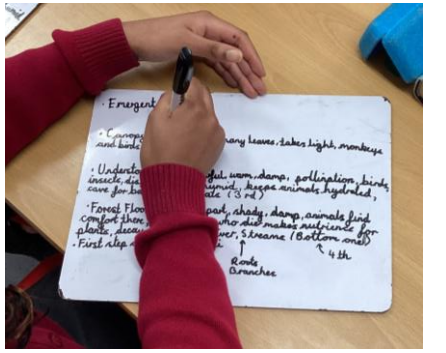
In PSHE, we began our new unit, *Money and Work*. The children discussed ambitious career aspirations and reflected on influences that may have shaped their goals.

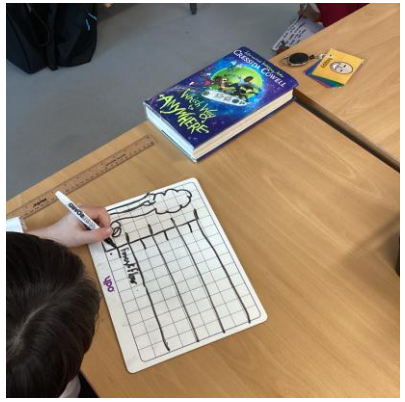


In Art, the children created a double-page spread about Peter Thorpe - an artist, illustrator and writer known for his striking rocket and outer-space themed artwork. Over the coming weeks, we will continue to take inspiration from his style as we begin creating our own collages.

Year 6 (Pogson Class and Walker Class)

In English, we have been exploring how writers use speech and dialogue to convey a character's personality and emotions, and how it can also advance the action of the vents in a story. We have generated a range of ideas for our own moral, which we will be writing next week!

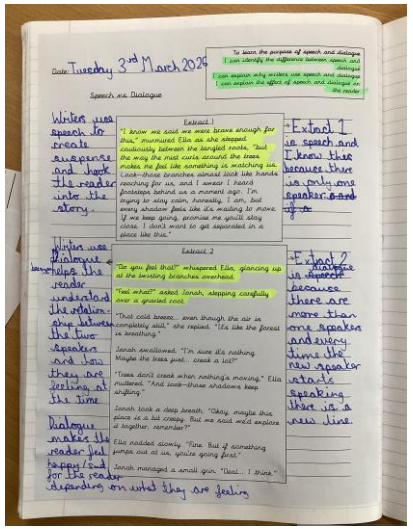




In Maths, we have been multiplying and dividing decimals by integers, including by 10, 100 and 1000. We have used our knowledge of existing methods, such as short multiplication and short division.

In Geography, we have been exploring the layers of the rainforest, which include: the emergent layer, the canopy, the understorey and the forest floor. We completed our own research using a range of secondary sources and presented our research in a range of different ways, including an information text and a double page spread.

On Tuesday, we had the author Jenny McLachlan visit us in school. We had an exciting assembly with her and we created our very own dragon, based on her book series 'Dragon Riders: Land of Roar'. It was very inspiring to get to hear from a real author! Jenny shared with us how she came to create her stories, explaining how lots of it are happy memories and games she used to play when she was younger.



On Thursday, we visited the Royal Shakespeare Company Theatre to watch 'The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind'. It was also World Book Day on Thursday. Before we went to the theatre, we were able to share some of our favourite books and recommended reads with other children in the class. We visited the library to explore some other books and authors, which we would like to read in the future.

Collective Worship

On Thursday, we took part in a story share, where different adults in the school visited different classrooms to share a story for World Book Day.

On Monday, we spoke about joy and how we can live a life of joy.

This week, Kerr Class led Friday's Celebration Collective Worship and shared their knowledge on Holi. Well Done, Kerr Class!

Collective worship at St Gabriel's always aims to be **inspirational** for all, **invitational** to all and **inclusive** of all.

Key Dates: Spring 2

Friday 13th March: Anning Class Celebration Worship

Friday 13th March: Easter Bingo (3.30-5pm)
Please purchase your books through Arbor. You are able to purchase more than one book through the system.
Refreshments will be available on the night, as well as a chocolate raffle.
We are also kindly asking for donations of Easter eggs and chocolate leading up to the event. Please bring these donations to the office.

Monday 16th March: Nursery Mother's Day Event
We are hosting a Mother's Day event in Nursery, where an adult can come and take part in activities with their child. See below for guidance on booking.

Thursday 19th March: Year 3 and 4 Easter Concert

Monday 23rd – Thursday 26th March: Parent/Carer Consultations
Please book via Arbor and see times and dates available for each teacher.
Booking will open at 12pm on Monday 9th March.

Tuesday 24th March and Wednesday 25th March: Nursery Spring Craft Sessions
To celebrate the end of the Spring Term, we would like to welcome families to Nursery to take part in a range of activities with their child. For both of our Nursery events, families can book onto one allocated slot. Due to space limitations, only one adult is able to attend (and babies in arms).

Friday 20th March: Bell Class Celebration Worship

Friday 27th March: Pogson Class Celebration Worship

Community Events

Thanks to the sponsors of the event, Troubador Publishing, we have some amazing vouchers to be won for a range of places, as well as Easter treats!

Tickets are £5 per book (5 games). All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please purchase your books through Arbor. You are able to purchase more than one book through the system.

Refreshments will be available on the night, as well as a chocolate raffle.

We are also kindly asking for donations of Easter eggs and chocolate leading up to the event. Please bring these donations to the office.

World Book Day

We had such a fun day on Thursday for World Book Day. It was a day full of celebrating the joy of reading with activities that got everyone excited about stories and books.

The children loved trying to guess the mystery members of staff reading in disguise for the Masked Reader and there were lots of giggles and surprised faces as they figured out who was behind each mask.

The library was full of excitement as children explored new books and discovered hidden favourites. The children also enjoyed listening to a story read by a different teacher. A true highlight was the gathering of students across all ages. Classes were paired, giving older and younger children the chance to share special storytelling moments. The children exchanged their favorite stories and it was heartwarming to watch them reading to and with one another, listening attentively and engaging enthusiastically with each other's books.

There were lots of other activities taking place throughout the day, including book scavenger hunts, online author events, writing ten-word tales, designing National Book Token competition entries, as well as quizzes and illustration activities. It was a truly memorable day and everyone had a lot of fun!

Well done to everyone who took part in the Book in a Box competition! It has been wonderful to see books brought to life in such creative and imaginative ways, celebrating the joy and magic of reading. Your effort and enthusiasm have truly shone through. Winners will be announced and prizes awarded during Celebration Collective Worship next Friday.

World Book Day

Staff had lots of fun dressing up too!

Author Visit

On Tuesday, we were incredibly lucky to welcome **Jenny McLachlan** to St. Gabriel's for a truly special visit. It was a real privilege to host such a talented and inspiring author and the excitement across the school was clear from the start. The children were thoroughly engaged, listening carefully as Jenny shared how she became an author, what inspires her stories and the journey from first ideas to published books. It was great for them to discover that authors were once children with big imaginations too!

A wonderful highlight of the day was when the children had the opportunity to take part in bringing parts of her stories to life, with Jenny's dragon puppet adding an extra touch of magic and fun. There was laughter, enthusiasm and so much energy in the room. It was also lovely to see so many happy, excited children proudly holding their books and waiting to have them signed. Every child from Nursery to Year 6 had the chance to hear from Jenny and be inspired by her passion for storytelling and Year 4 enjoyed taking part in a workshop with Jenny in the afternoon, creating maps of their own story worlds.

We feel extremely fortunate to have shared such an amazing day and we hope it has sparked a lifelong love of reading and writing in our pupils.

Thank you to the PTFA for funding this for the children. It was a wonderful experience for them all.

An Afternoon with Cressida Cowell

We are super excited to tell you that Kenilworth Books have an amazing event coming up very soon with the wonderful Cressida Cowell and you are all invited!

Cressida Cowell is an author best known for the book series 'How to Train Your Dragon'. She is celebrating the paperback release of 'Which Way to the Future', the third thrilling instalment in the 'Which Way' series.

Expect an action-packed session as Cressida shares the inspiration behind her stories and reveals her top tips for aspiring writers and artists. It promises to be energetic, inspiring and totally unmissable!

The event is taking place at Kenilworth School & Sixth Form on Sunday 19th April at 1pm. Anyone is welcome and tickets cost £5.

See the poster for more details and to book tickets.

Kenilworth Books

An Afternoon with

Cressida Cowell

Sunday 19th April, 1pm

at Kenilworth School & Sixth Form

Join us for an unforgettable afternoon with bestselling author **Cressida Cowell**! We're celebrating the paperback release of *Which Way to the Future*, the third thrilling installment in the *Which Way* series. Expect an action-packed session as Cressida shares the inspiration behind her stories and reveals her top tips for aspiring writers and artists. Energetic, inspiring, and totally unmissable!

hachette CHILDREN'S GROUP

Ticket: £5

Book your ticket at

www.kenilworthbooks.co.uk

BOOKDROP

We're excited to share the latest issue of BOOKDROP, a free children's book newsletter for families by Authorfy.

This month features an exciting Q&A with Jamie Smart, the brilliant creator of Bunny vs Monkey, alongside a showcase of fantastic new children's books, honest reviews and hand-picked recommendations to inspire readers of all ages.

You'll also find helpful reading tips from the team at The Open University, plus a look at the 2026 shortlist for the The Children's Book Award.

Follow the link here: https://authorfy.com/bookdrop-newsletter/

We hope you enjoy exploring this month's issue together and discovering some wonderful new reads!

Recommended Read

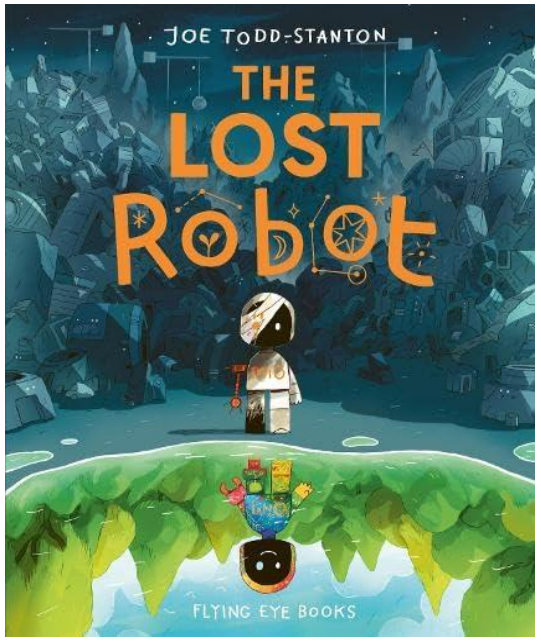
The Lost Robot by Joe Todd-Stanton

From the visionary author-illustrator behind The Secret of Black Rock and The Comet comes a stunning and heartwarming story of belonging and self-confidence, as a little robot who wakes up in a rubbish dump attempts to find their way home.

Deep in the heart of a rubbish dump, a little broken robot woke up...

Mio can't remember where they came from or how long it's been, but they know they're not meant to be there. They go in search of their memories and the home they once knew, only to discover that everything has changed.

A stunning picture book with a beautiful message about loving yourself and knowing there is always a place where you belong.



Online Safety

According to Ofcom, 90% of children are watching online videos and browsing the internet regularly.

Children may love to stream videos and look up information, it's a fun way to learn and relax after all, but they must be guided. The e-space is filled with inappropriate content and dangerous material. It is important that parents, and even teachers, are able to steer their pupils and youngsters towards the right places when online.

Internet Matters has published a guide dedicated to supporting adults in setting digital boundaries for children so that they can make smart choices and build healthy online habits. In the Internet Matters guide, you'll find practical tips on managing content access, the use of safety controls, advice on setting boundaries and ways to educate children on how to stay secure online.

If interested please follow the link below:

https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/by-activity/watching-and-browsing-online-a-parents-guide/

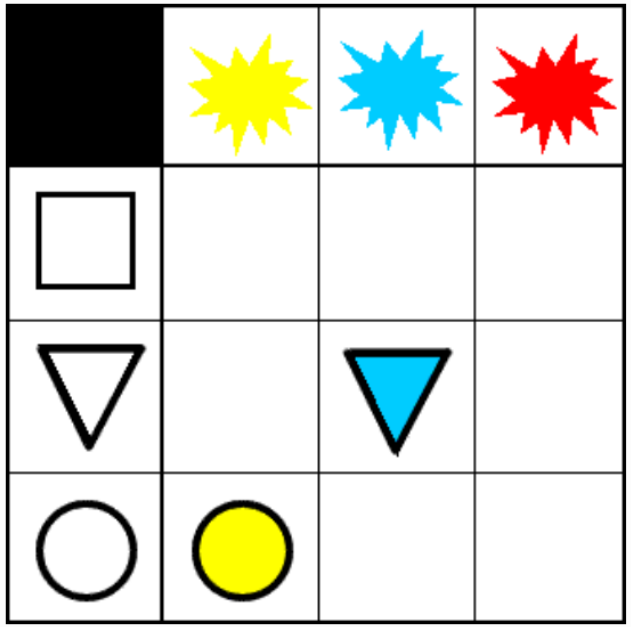
Maths Problem of the Week

KS1

What do you see?

What do you notice?

What do you wonder?



What would you draw in the empty boxes?

KS2

Calling all detectives!

You will need to think creatively, use your reasoning skills and your problem-solving strategies to find the mystery number from the table below.

18	86
120	42
46	64
80	8
22	83

- The number has two digits.
- Both of the digits are even.
- The digit in the tens place is greater that the digit in the ones place.
- The ones digit is not in the three times table.
- The tens digit is not double the ones digit.
- The sum of the two digits is in the five times table.

Challenge

There are five brown frogs and five green frogs sitting on their lily pads, as shown:

You have to swap the green frogs with the brown frogs, but - there are some rules.

***Only move one square at a time.**

***You can jump only over one frog of a different colour.**

***All frogs can only move forwards from the direction they start in.**

Family Support

This week's Family Information Service newsletter includes information about:

- Webinars for parents
- Latest SEND newsletter
- Schools White Paper 2026

and much more!

Worried about a Child?

If you have concerns that a child is suffering any form of abuse, neglect or cruelty, contact the Warwickshire Children and Families Family Connect immediately by calling 01926 414144.
Lines are open Monday to Thursday 8.30am - 5.30pm, Friday 8.30am-5.00pm.

If you need to get in touch out of usual office hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Team immediately by calling 01926 886922.

If you think that a child is at immediate risk, contact the police immediately by calling 999.

St Gabriel's CofE Academy, Houlton Way, Houlton, Rugby, CV23 1AN

✉office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org ☎01788 222405