



The Warbler- Wrens and Robins Newsletter

(part of our Bellbird Early Years offer)

Summer 2- Weeks 1 & 2



A letter and an invitation...

Wrens and Robins read the book 'Snuff' by Quentin Blake about an adventure had by a page boy called Snuff and his Knight, Sir Thomas Magpie. The next day, the children discovered an old looking letter from Sir Thomas inviting them to train to become knights themselves! The children were eager to become pages and start completing Sir Thomas' challenges.

Knights in Training

Sir Thomas sent us details of what knights wore 800 years ago and we discussed how this changed over time and why. The children made some spectacular swords and they were given names such as 'The King' and 'Power'. After seeing one of the Wrens make a scabbard, other children were inspired to have a go at making one. We learnt about coats of arms and wondered why knights started to have pictures on their shields and banners- ask your children and they will tell you!

The children designed their very own coat of arms and chose a 'charge' to represent something about themselves. We had eagles for power, rabbits for speed, dragons for cunning, lions for bravery and even butterflies for being able to float and fly across the battlefield! The children then made their own shields and surcoats. Finally, the children needed a horse, so of course, they made their own steed. Careful attention was paid to tying, threading and plaiting their beautiful manes. With horses like Sparkles, Gallop and Rainbow at the ready, our pages were nearly ready to be knights!



Arise, Sir Knight!

It was now time for the children's 'dubbing' ceremony which would turn them into knights. Luckily Queen Lovewell and King Smith were on hand for the occasion! The children had a ritual 'bath' (water sprayers at the ready!) and ceremonially knelt before their swords and shields. They entered Bellbird Castle and were knighted in front of their friends by the King and Queen. Our new knights then took part in a knightly tournament where they tested out their jousting skills, rescued princesses by negotiating tricky obstacles, undertook shield protection training, learnt how to use their sword safely and completed target practice to knock down the castle walls. Bellbird Castle is certainly safe in their hands!

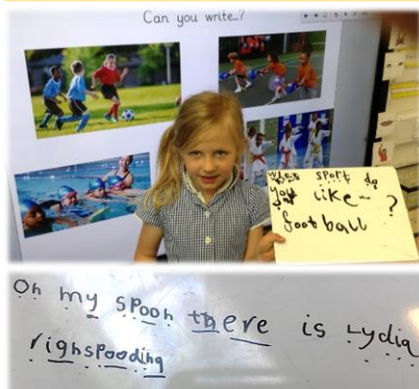
The Castle the Children Built...

Our knights now needed a castle to defend. We read 'The Castle the King Built' by the National Trust and looked at non-fiction books such as 'Peep Inside the Castle'. We examined different castles and how they had changed over time. The children spotted different features of what made castles hard to attack. They delighted in telling us what they knew about things like drawbridges, moats and spiral staircases. The children asked some brilliant questions too!

Using what they had learnt, the children then made their own castles out of bricks, sand and junk modelling. They used their imagination to find things to create things like portcullises and made the crenellated tops of towers with flower pots. They designed flags for the tops of their towers and even made clay 'stones' for the castle with stone mason's marks on them. Mud bricks have also been made and are currently drying in the sun before construction begins!



Sunny weather: Thank you for supporting your child in this hot weather by sending them to school with a water bottle, hat and with sun cream applied.



Phonics

In phonics, we have been continuing to practise reading longer words with more than one consonant at the beginning and end of the word and now including long vowel sounds (e.g. ai rather than a and ee rather than e). We have been reading words such as spoon, bright, sport, spoilt and three.

Tricky words: We have finished learning all of the tricky words needed for Reception. We will continue to revisit and revise these daily.

Maths

Wrens and Robins have got very good at seeing double recently! We read the book 'This is the Story of Alison Hubble' by Alan Ahlberg about a girl who went to bed single and woke up double! We have been finding different ways to double numbers from 1-10 all week including making double ladybirds and symmetrical butterflies.

The children then started practising sharing and grouping items equally and fairly. We learnt how to share out grapes and cookies into equal groups. However, when we tried to share out 13 baked beans, apart from getting messy, we discovered that not all numbers will share into two equal groups! Our investigations are ongoing...

Things to try at home

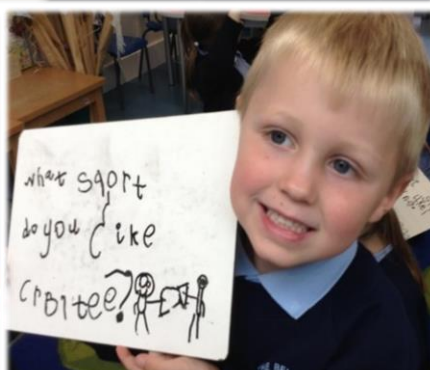
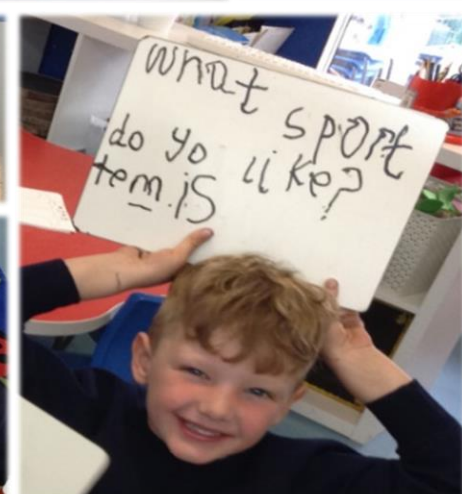
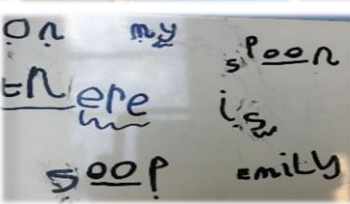
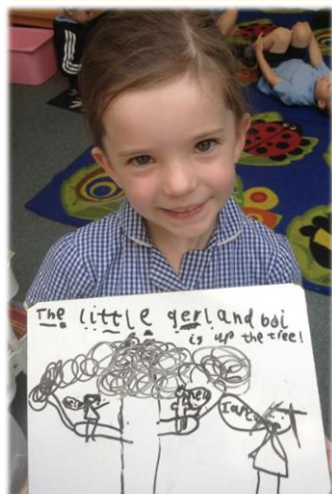
- Local visit-** Maybe go and visit a local castle! Walden Castle in Saffron Walden is a square keep castle in Saffron Walden built around 1141. Mountfitchet Castle in Stansted Mountfitchet is a Motte and Bailey castle and a Norman Village. There is also fossil hunting in their Palaeontology House and life-sized dinosaurs!



Sports Day: We were so proud of our littlest learners on their first ever Sports Day. They showed determination, resilience and teamwork when participating in their activities and the running races. Well done Wrens and Robins!



You are the coolest!
Happy Father's Day to all our Dads and special people in the children's life. Thank you for all you do. The children loved making their cards and keyrings for you!



Wrens and Robins know all the best ways to keep cool!

