



## The Warbler- Wrens and Robins Newsletter

(part of our Bellbird Early Years offer)

Autumn 1- Week 6-7



**Phonics and Reading:** **New phonemes / graphemes:** The fortnight before half term, the children learnt the following new sounds (phonemes) and the graphemes (letters) that represent them:

ck sock



Rock that sock!

c- Curl around the heel of the sock.

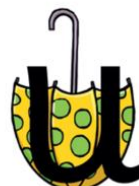
k- Down the sock, up and back down the toe.

e elephant



Around the elephant's eye and curl down its trunk.

u umbrella



Down and around the umbrella, and back to the ground.

r rainbow



From the cloud to the ground and over the rainbow.

h helicopter



Down, up and over the helicopter.

l lollipop



Down the lollipop stick.

b bear



Down the bear's back, up and round its tummy.

f flamingo



Down the flamingo to its foot and across its wings.

**Blending:** See if your child can sound talk and then blend the sounds to read these words.

sock, pet, peck, mud, red, hug, log, big, rub, fit, fan

**Digraph:** The children learnt their very first digraph- ck. **A digraph is two letters that make one sound.** When we are learning to read words, we put sound buttons underneath the graphemes and digraphs. The graphemes have a dot sound button underneath (or a bean!) and the digraphs have a dash underneath (or a sausage!). Just like the word sock to your left. This helps children to identify the sounds.

**Tricky words:** We have learnt two more tricky words- **I** and **the**.

sock

I the

**Phonics Fun!** Yet again, we have been having lots of fun exploring our new sounds:

**When looking at /ck/** we read 'Stick Man' by Julia Donaldson and the children enjoyed making some superb stick men of their own. They made repeated pattern scarves to put round Stick Man's neck now it is Autumn, decorated socks that 'rock' and had fun washing and pairing smelly socks.

A highlight of week 6 was on the day **we learnt /e/**. Wrens and Robins discovered that the elves had moved into our woodland area! The children found a tiny elf door under one of our trees and the elves had left us a message to say they wanted to stay with us! The children welcomed them in by drawing pictures

to put in envelopes and leaving them in the elf post box along with lovely presents for them made in the junk modelling area.

The sound /u/ saw us read 'Monsters Wear Underpants' by Claire Freedman. Cue underpants designing for monsters and umbrella making to protect them from the Autumn showers.

By the end of the week, the phoneme /r/ led us to summon the Autumn rain by making rain makers- yes folks, that deluge was actually our fault- sorry! Our littlest learners had to really concentrate to pour their rice into their rain makers so that they were half full, linking in to our capacity work in Maths. The children had fun painting rainbows by carefully observing and copying the colours that make them up and we chatted about how rainbows are made.

Wrens and Robins really practiced making a gentle /h/ sound by holding their hands up to their face and feeling their breath as they made the sound. We heard that more elves had moved into the woodland area and needed houses to live in. The children were expert builders for our tiny new friends. They had fun painting Autumn hedgehogs, making hats, sniffing and snipping herb stew and making heart playdoh biscuits.



We practised the sound /l/ by pretending to lick a lollipop. The children then designed and made their own glorious lollipops. The flavours were amazing and we all wanted to try the one that tasted of real rainbows! Children also made their own lemon squash using real lemons in the messy play area.

The highlight of week 7 was when we learnt the sound /b/. The children discovered that the elves loved our school so much that they had invited their friends the Bog Babies to live with us. Our littlest learners were enchanted to hear that they live under the ground and talk with tiny squeaks! Lots of little ears pressed to the ground were rewarded with faint squeaking, much to their delight! To welcome them in, the children buttered them hot buttered beans on toast in the messy play area and made their own bog baby buddies. They were also brilliant bridge builders on a large scale outside and also on a smaller scale inside with Lego.

By the end of the week, the phoneme /f/ led us to a spot of colour mixing to paint some pink flamingos. Children went fishing in the messy area and revisited their skill of making paper concertinas with an extra challenge of constructing a concertina paper fan. The resilience and determination the children show with all of their projects is a pure joy to behold- bravo Wrens and Robins!



### Purposeful Writing

The children have been taking part in more exciting writing challenges this past fortnight. Children were provided with socks a plenty and they could write /ck/ to make us smell a lovely smelling sock or challenge themselves by writing 'sock' to get us to sniff a super smelly sock of their own design! Needless to say, we ended up sniffing some very smelly socks that day!

The children absolutely adored writing letters to the elves. They needed to write their name on their letter and address the envelope with an 'e' so the elves knew it was for them. The next day, the children were overjoyed to

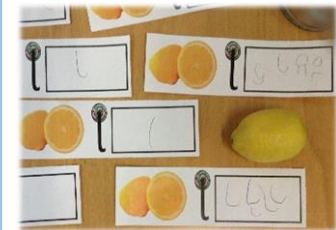




discover that the elves had drawn them a picture in return, written them a thank you letter and recorded a special message for them. The next day the post box was overflowing with named cards, letters and presents for the elves including a tiny elf sweeping brush, a cool hammock to swing on, elf four poster beds and much more!

Our littlest learners also love writing passcodes. They wrote the passcode // to try a slice of lemon. Much hilarity ensued after they handed over their passcode to try the lemons! The conversation about what it tasted like was amazing, despite their screwed up sour faces, and so many children had a go at tasting something they hadn't tasted before.

Finally, the children wanted to hear their new friends the Bog Babies a little better. We decided to make Bog Baby listening devices to hear them more clearly. The children's imaginations ran wild with how to make them and the more /b/ graphemes they wrote on them, the stronger the devices were. Many a Bog Baby conversation was listened in upon that afternoon, with children lying on the floor listening intently through their home-made devices!



### Friday Play Projects:

Week 6's play project was the grand finale to our work in English on 'The Little Red Hen'. The children retold the story to each other using the actions and we thought about how sad the Little Red Hen must have been when her friends wouldn't help her make the bread. We decided we would help her instead! The children were challenged to build the Little Red Hen a machine to help her gather the wheat faster. The children made some brilliant tractors and combine harvesters, some even complete with farmers to drive them! They helped her to cut real wheat and used pestles and mortars to try to grind the grains into flour. They made salt dough together in small groups, carefully pouring full cups of flour and half cups of salt and water and they really enjoyed fashioning their own loaves to help the Little Red Hen. Finally, the children made an ABAB patterned scarf to cheer her up. They did a brilliant job!

At the end of Week 7, the children got a letter from a cheeky wizard. Our class mascots, Monty and Kipper had been fishing in the wizard's special lake. The wizard got cross and turned them into ducks! How rude! Determined to get their heroes back to the classroom, the children discussed solutions to this problem. We decided to make our own magic spell to turn the wizard into a duck instead. Our littlest learners wrote the magic spell word 'duck' and added it into the cauldron. They drew 1, 2 and 3 ingredients to make the spell more powerful and poured out the potion to exactly half full in the messy area. They made their own magic wands to cast their spells. To sneak into the wizard's castle, they had to put the monster guarding his castle to sleep by designing and playing an ABAB musical repeating pattern. Finally, the children made traps to trap the wizard. With musical patterns made and the monster fast asleep, the children cast their spells and released their beloved toys from the spell. The cheeky wizard remains as a duck, under close guard of the children in case he should try his cheeky antics again!

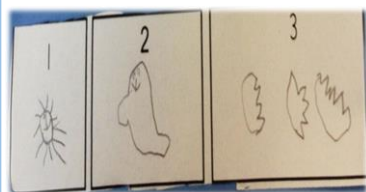
**Maths:** In Maths, Wrens and Robins have been comparing, making patterns and representing the numbers 1-3.

**Comparing-** We compared length by looking at worms that were longer or shorter than each other. We looked at different shopping bags and compared how heavy they were. We examined the shopping to see what items were heavier or lighter. We poured drinks for our favourite toys and compared their capacity focusing on full, empty and half full (or half empty- depending on your opinion!).

**Repeating patterns-** We introduced the children to ABAB repeating patterns with colour, size, shape and even sound for example: **red, yellow, red, yellow**; **big, small, big, small** or **bells, shaker, bells, shaker**. We also got good at spotting mistakes in the patterns.

**Recognising and representing 1, 2 and 3-** We looked at how to recognise and represent the numbers 1, 2 and 3. We represented the number with their numerals, using physical objects, numicon and with counters in ten frames. We have been learning to **subitise (don't count, see the amount)** by remembering:

- 1- One is all by itself.
- 2- Two is one and one more.
- 3- Two and one for free, makes three.



Number 1 is like a stick.  
A straight line that is  
very quick.

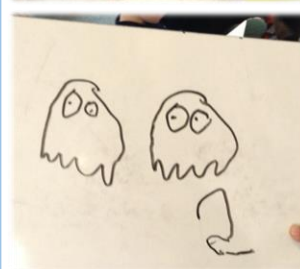


two

Half a heart will never do,  
Slide to the right, make a 2.



Around a tree,  
Around a tree.  
That's the way  
to make a three!



**Topic- All About Me:** We finished our topic work by the children discussing and reflecting on what they like and dislike. We thought about whether it is okay to like different things and we read 'Toby's Doll House' by Ragnahild Scamell about a boy who wants a dolls house for his birthday. We thought about whether there were toys that were just for boys and just for girls. Thoughtfully, our learners concluded that children can play with whatever toys interest them.



## PSHE:

We have been talking about hygiene and self-care this fortnight. We thought about when and why it is important to wash our hands and we practised good handwashing techniques. We learnt when it is important to use a tissue and how we catch our sneezes if we don't have a tissue. We all practised how to blow our noses successfully and then learnt to *catch it, bin it, kill it*. The children have been brilliant at using tissues at school, which are freely available to help them as the winter colds and sniffles set in.

The PSHE highlight of the fortnight was our famous bottom wiping lesson! Many children are often not yet confident wiping bottoms completely clean after doing a poo. After reading 'Who's in the Loo?' by Jeanne Willis, we talked about how it is important to use the toilet when you need it at school. Then, using the handy aid of bottom shaped balloons and brown shaving foam, we demonstrated how to fold the paper and wipe successfully! Aside from the fun and giggles, we hope our littlest learners feel a bit more confident in this important life skill.



### Things to try at home:

**Repeating patterns-** what ABAB repeating patterns can you spot and make? Can you make your own patterns by lining up different coloured sweets or vegetables on your plate? You could even make some ABAB repeating pattern fruit kebabs- banana, strawberry, banana, strawberry.

**Bath time capacity-** Have fun while your child is in the bath exploring capacity. How full is the bath? Half full? What do they notice when they get in the bath? Take some plastic cups into the bath and get them to pour you a delicious 'drink'. Can they make their cups half full and full? Get them to chat about what their drink tastes like. Is it nice or yucky?

