

Castles, Knights and Dragons

Squirrel class Spring 2

To **engage** the children in the topic, we will work in teams to build a castle. The challenge will be for the children to make sure that their castle has a turret, tower and a drawbridge.

Through the develop stage of the topic the children will:

- Learn about the purpose of different parts of the castle and the correct vocabulary.
- Design and make a castle using a box.
- Explore castles through the ages, and create our own historical timeline.
- Research the differences between a Motte and bailey castle and a stone castle.
- Investigate the roles of others in a castle and the variety of jobs they had.
- Research how castles were attacked and defended.
- Explore the differences between events – now and then as we look at banquets and parties.
- In our Art lessons we will explore the work of Paul Klee's 'Castles in the sun'. We will use two dimensional shapes to recreate Klee's work. We will also describe and evaluate Paul Klee's work as well as our own.



Our author this half term is Helen Docherty. We will start with her book, *The knight who would not fight* and we will use this as inspiration to decorate the author board in the classroom. Other titles include, *The snatchabook*, *Blue baboon finds her tune*, *The screen thief*, and *You can never run out of love*. I love to share books with the children and especially books that they bring in from home. If you have any books your child would like to share – please do remember to put their name on the inside cover.

The homework task – We want you to become engineers! You can build the tallest tower **or** strongest drawbridge. To build the bridge you can only use spaghetti and jelly babies or marshmallows. To build a tower you can only use newspaper and tape. The tower must stand without extra support and no glue! You must measure the tower and record the height for us to put on display. You must see how much weight your bridge can hold and record this for our display too.

Reading

Reading books will be changed on a Monday and Friday. Phonics books will be changed once your child has read in three phonics sessions.

P.E

All children will have P.E with Mr Rogers on a Thursday morning and on a Friday afternoon with Mrs Whittle.

The reception children will take part in some of the topic learning beside Year 1 and 2. They will also this term continue to follow the Early Years curriculum. Each week they will have a book focus that links to their writing and will also continue to write during their phonics sessions.

Please continue to support your children at home with their reading. Reading every night with your child is a good habit and a great way to set routines. Children can also practice their letter formation and scissor cutting skills. All these activities will greatly support your child's learning that we do every day at school.

Key Vocabulary

Stone Castle – A castle build from stone.

Motte and bailey castle – A castle build from wood. The main part of the castle is built on a hill (motte) with the surrounding courtyard being below (bailey).

Turret – A small tower on top of a larger tower, usually in the corner of the castle.

Ramparts – A defensive wall of the castle with a walkway at the top.

Battlements – Regularly spaced, squared openings at the top of the castle wall for shooting through.

Moat – A deep, wide ditch surrounding the castle that is filled with water.

Drawbridge - A hinged bridge that can be lowered to travel over the castle moat.

Portcullis – A strong, heavy grating that can be lowered to block gateway entry.

Thank you so much for your continued support with your children and their learning. Having a positive home/ school link greatly benefits your child/ren. You will see that I have included some key vocabulary for this topic. This is so you can support your children learn and understand the key words we will use throughout the term.

I also want to thank you for the support you gave the children with their pervious homework. It was of an extremely high standard.

Please feel free to come and talk to me if you have any queries. I do try to make myself available at the start of teach day - though if not urgent, I would encourage you to chat at the end of the day, as I will be able to give you more time. In addition, thank you for continuing to stay the other side of wooden fence in the morning. It has had a very positive impact on the start to the day and has greatly helped the reception children.

Let us hope that as we approach spring, we will welcome warmer temperatures and sunny days.