

Literacy

We will be reading, listening to and talking about lots of animal-themed stories, including *Dear Zoo*, *Farmer Duck*, *Elmer* and *Rainbow Fish*. We will develop our ability to retell these stories, using sounds, props and puppets to help us. Throughout the term, we will continue to work on our letter shapes, aiming to all write our names clearly and correctly. Alongside this, we will develop our phonics knowledge, matching letters to sounds and starting to read simple words.

Expressive Arts and Design

We'll be doing lots of animal themed art this term, developing our ability to mix and select colours as well as starting to explore clay figures. We will also be designing and making homes for our pets, including tanks, cages and stables. Finally, we will be doing some animal-themed dances, inspired by the story of *Giraffes Can't Dance*.

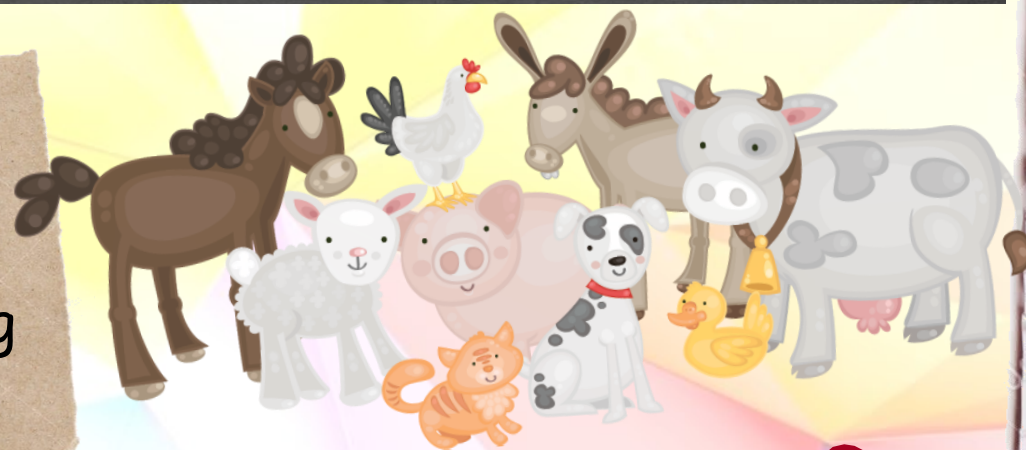
Physical Development

Daily activities, including cutting, threading and tracing will give us lots of opportunities to develop our fine motor skills. Central to this is our pencil control, which we need to secure so that we can make clear letter shapes. We will also develop our gross motor skills through jumping, pedalling and climbing, as well as moving like the animals that we meet in our topic - so we'll be hopping, jumping and slithering around class!

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We will think about the way that we look after our pets (and might even be visited by a few of our animal friends). We will discuss different feelings, recognising what it feels like to be worried or embarrassed. Throughout the term we will be developing our independence and making sure we can all confidently ask for help.

This half-term, we'll be learning about...



ANIMALS!

LADYBIRDS - SUMMER 2025

Mathematics

As we continue with our *Essentials for Counting* programme, we will be exploring patterns and comparison. We will learn to put things in order of size, using language like *larger*, *smaller*, *tallest* and *shortest*, and will use these skills to compare the size of different animals. We will also use 2d shapes to create repeating patterns and collages linked to our animals topic, naming and describing the shapes that we use. Throughout the term we will continue to develop our counting and number recognition skills, matching the number of objects in a group to the digit that represents that number and answering the key question, "How many are there?"

Understanding the world

We're focussing on animals this term, thinking a lot about similarities and differences between the creatures that we meet. We will look at animals that live in different places (like oceans, jungles and farms), and will think about other ways to group them, using words like *nocturnal*, *amphibious* and *hibernate*. We will also consider the role of the people who look after these animals, like *vets*, *zookeepers* and *farmers*. With our 'scientist' hats on, we will investigate the way that animals change as they grow, building on the knowledge of *frogs* and *butterflies* we developed last term. Across our topic, we will also talk about how *fragile* life can be and how important it is to be *gentle* and *kind* to animals.

Communication and Language

We will continue to develop our vocabulary through our words and signs of the week, all linking in with our *Animals* topic. We will be describing their appearance, the sounds they make and the places in which they live. Our *vet-themed* role-play area will also give us lots of opportunities to use our new animal vocabulary.

Throughout the term we will be reading and saying lots of rhymes linked to our topic, including *Old McDonald* and *Little Rabbit Foo Foo*. We will also develop our listening skills by learning to recognise animals by the sounds they make.

Literacy

- Sharing stories is just about the most valuable thing you can do at home. Try to read with your child as often as possible and talk to them about the story. Can they remember phrases from the story? Which characters do they particularly like?
- We follow the Read Write Inc phonics programme, and they have provided guidance on supporting your child at home: www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/

Expressive Arts and Design

- Have a go at some of the fab art activities on the Tate Kids site: www.tate.org.uk/kids/make
- Act out stories together and encourage your child to tell you stories linked to their play.
- Talk about what your child has made at school and encourage them to describe the way they made it to you.

Physical Development

- Build an obstacle course in the park or garden together, running (carefully) around benches or chairs, crawling under blankets and clambering through cardboard boxes.
- Play games together that involve kicking, throwing and catching balls.
- Encourage your child to get dressed on their own and brush their teeth twice a day.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Talk about ways in which we can look after animals and the natural world, like gardening, putting out bird food or looking after family pets, and encourage your child to do some of these things with you.
- Play turn-taking games together, and support your child in learning to wait for their turn and listen to others.

Ideas for supporting learning at home:



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Mathematics

- Keep practicing counting, whenever and wherever possible - you could count houses on the way to school, footsteps on the way to bed, shoes in the house, players on the team, objects in the shopping trolley, claps, nods... Anything and everything you can think of!
- Play board games with numbered squares together, and practice saying the names of the squares you land on together. Simple card games give lots of opportunities for practicing number names, too.
- Practice writing numbers in sand, salt or water, or try making numbers out of groups of pebbles.

Communication and Language

- We will continue to use Tapestry to share work that we have done in school and share ideas for learning beyond school. You can log in, view work and add comments and pictures at eylj.org. Speak to a member of staff if you're not sure about how to log in.
- Make up silly sentences together where every word has to start with the same letter or the words all rhyme.
- When you're sharing stories with your child, ask them what they think will happen next or how the story might end.

Understanding the world

- How many different animals can you find in your local area - as well as dogs and cats, how many types of bird can you spot and how many minibeasts (like beetles, worms and moths) can you identify? How do they move? What do they seem to be eating? Why do you think they live in these places? There are loads of questions to ask, and it's fine to not know all the answers (understanding that you don't know is definitely a Learning Superhero skill!)
- Continue looking for (and talking about) changes in our environment linked to the seasons. Can you see signs that plants and animals are growing more now that Spring has arrived?