



Acorns Newsletter

January 13th 2025



Happy New Year!

Happy New Year to all our Reception families. We hope you had a very happy and healthy Christmas holiday. We had a great first week back to school last week and it was wonderful hear the children's exciting Christmas news and to see them so happy and settled...it looks like many have been doing some growing over the holidays too! Thank you from us all for all your kind messages and gifts at the end of last term.

Our learning this term

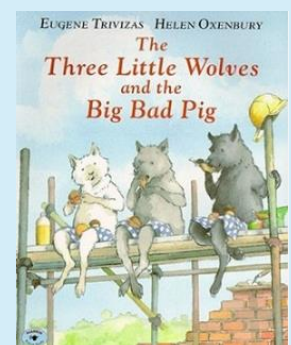
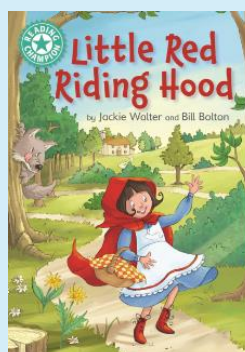
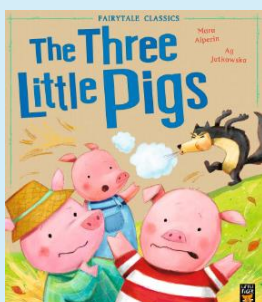


Our theme for learning this half term is 'Traditional Tales'. Please have a look online at our Spring Half Termly Overview which outlines the learning we will cover through these traditional tales. There is also a new 'collectable' to share this learning simply with your child. Over the course of the half term, we hope to immerse your child in the language of storytelling and to help them to develop a sense of the ways that stories are structured. These are very important early story writing skills.

We will be reading a range of different traditional tales, however we will be specifically focusing on the following stories each week: Little Red Riding Hood, The Little Red Hen, The Gingerbread Man, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and The Enormous Turnip.

Books we shared this week

This week we have enjoyed a collection of traditional tales with a common theme...the Big Bad Wolf! After reading an alternative fairy tale about the 'Big Bad Pig', the children had lots of fun thinking of their own 'big' and 'bad' character and gave super descriptions of their actions.




Reading Diaries

Your child will bring home a new reading book or activity each week and we will make a note in their reading diary which skill they need to focus on at home with you. We will now change all the books on a Monday after school so your child will not come home with their reading diary or book on a Monday. This will get handed back to them on a Tuesday.

To guide you, we will put a list of your child's reading targets inside the front cover of their diary so you can see what they are currently learning to help them become a reader.

Although we give you a skill to focus on at home, you may notice they are using the other skills listed at the same time...this is great!

When I read, I am learning to:	
1	Enjoy sharing a book with an adult e.g. Bed Time or at my Library.
2	Recite well known rhymes and sing songs.
3	Hold a book correctly and turn the pages with care.
4	Understand book vocabulary: front, back, picture, words, page.
5	Talk about the book and what I can see in the pictures.
6	Use the story and pictures to guess what might happen.
7	Say what happened at the beginning and end of a story.
8	Understand that the words have meaning and tell you what is happening.
9	Know where the words are.
10	Begin to spot letters that I know e.g. letters in my name.
11	Listen to the story and use picture clues to guess a word an adult left out.
12	Answer simple questions about the story/information book.

My reading book this week:	Date:
Reading target I am working on: <small>See numbered targets on the first page of this diary.</small>	
This is how I read at home this week: <small>Please make a brief comment about how they have got on with reading this book after their 4 reads.</small>	<small>You or your child can tick, star or draw a smiley face for each reading practise this week!</small> Day 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4 <input type="checkbox"/>

We really value your feedback about how your child has read at home. It's amazing how quickly they can grasp a new skill and so your observations really help us to provide them with the correct reading material for home. Just a quick comment about how they are getting on. You could refer to the targets as we do e.g. 'Really doing well with target 10 this week'. We really recommend reading with your child every day. As a minimum, your child should be practising their reading four times per week. Five to 10 minutes is all it takes to make a difference.

Songs we have sung this week

This half term in our musical learning we are going to be introducing the children to the musical elements e.g. pulse, rhythm, pitch, dynamics, tempo. As a vehicle for this learning, and linked to our theme of Traditional Tales, we will be using the BBC Schools Music resource 'Little Red Riding Hood'. The story is broken down into weekly episodes with a linked animation and song to learn. This week we began Part 1 of the programme which included learning the song 'I Love Red'. You can access this session at home following this link:

[Little Red Riding Hood. 1: I love red! - BBC Teach](#)



It's a small world!

"Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world." Benjamin Franklin

One of the most popular areas in our provision is the Small World play area where children can use a range of miniature objects and materials to create their own story and real-life scenes. This play is wonderful for language building; whilst thinking imaginatively, they are talking out loud, listening to their friends and exploring or building new vocabulary. As we move through the term, we are adding enhancements to this area to enable the children to re-tell the stories they have heard or innovate stories of their own.

Why not have a go at creating a small world at home with your child. Below are some images of simple ideas you can use to ignite play. You may have some small toys and objects already which you can use such as play people, toy cars, farm or zoo animals and building bricks. Your child could create their own settings or buildings using recycled objects such as cereal boxes, kitchen roll tubes, milk bottle lids or scraps of fabric.

Finally, our natural world provides some wonderful resources for miniature play e.g. a leafy branch becomes a tree, small pebbles become rocky mountains, pathways and dens can be made with twigs.



Below are some home learning links for you to use over the next fortnight with your child at home. These videos are only a few minutes long but will really boost your child's phonics skills. They will also give you an insight into how phonics is taught in school. The links will remain active until April so please revisit any letters sent previously to help your child retain their new learning.

Your child has been learning to read two letter sounds or 'digraphs' in school. We tell the children that these are two letters that make special friends with each other when they sit together and only make one sound.

Please follow these links to practise these sounds at home:

[Special Friends - sh](#)



[Special Friends - qu](#)



[Special Friends - th](#)



[Special Friends - ng](#)



Blending step 1: Your child may still be learning to hear and blend the sounds in a word. These Fred Talk Games below will help your child to develop this important pre-reading skill:

[Fred at the woods](#)

[Fred and the weather](#)

[Fred's Garden](#)



Blending step 2: To help your child learn to read by blending the sounds in simple three letter cvc words (consonant-vowel-consonant), they will need to practise their 'Fred Talking - Read the word' skills. Please use these videos with them at home to help them learn to blend, they can use letter cards or magnetic letters to make their own words as they play:

[Blending with Rosie - 3](#)

[Blending with Rosie - 4](#)

To extend your child a little further, ask them to try and write one of the words they have read with Rosie. Ask them to hold up their 'Fred Fingers' (three fingers as below) and follow these steps:

1. Say the whole word you wish to spell aloud e.g. "mat"
2. Pinch each finger in turn as you 'Fred Talk' each sound (working from left to right on your fingers).
3. Keep the sounds in your head and write the word!



Christmas Reflection

The children had such a wonderful time in school during December. It was lovely to see so many of you at our Christmas Craft Afternoon getting involved in the festive activities – we hope you took away some beautiful decorations which you can keep for many years to come. We want to say an enormous well done to the children for their amazing performance at our Reception Christmas Show – they had worked so hard to learn their songs and dances and were super excited to share this with you all.



A wonderful elf drawing with the name Poppy!



Ho Ho Ho!



Christmas Reflection



A yummy festive lunch!



Some festive games! We were super at taking turns and celebrating our friends wins!

And to finish some excellent writing from this week! We have been practising using our Fred Talk to write simple words and phrases. We are so proud of the super little writers that are emerging in Acorns!

