Welcome to the Cheshire & Wirral SLP Newsletter - Primary Science, Spring 1 2023

Hello!

At the start of the new year, it can be helpful to have a list of forthcoming science related dates such as these which include Darwin Day (12 February) and World Whale Day (a week later). Explorify (which has reached the magnificent total of 80,000 users) has a wealth of resources linked to evolution (if not Darwin directly). If you are looking to update your own knowledge, then the Natural History Museum's website is a good place to start. National Geographic Kids also has some good ideas, linked to the National Curriculum.

Another set of resources linked to this topic and well worth exploring is the ASE's Mary Anning – A fossil hunter's story. The film and associated activities are targeted at pupils aged 9-11, covering the big ideas of fossils and evolution, the nature of scientific enquiry and the strengths and limitations of scientific knowledge.

This time of year is synonymous with the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch and the school version, the Big Schools' birdwatch. There's also a live lesson schedules for 26 January, which can also be watched after the event. What a fabulous way to introduce children to some citizen science activities, to get them outside for some outdoor learning and to improve their wellbeing by helping them take an interest in nature.

Meanwhile, could YOU help with some research? Are you a primary school teacher who has taught science and/or engineering to 5–11-year-olds, in a mainstream school in England, in the last 5 years? Could you spare 15 minutes to help Nada Mahyoub, the SEERIH PhD scholar to investigate the relationship between the use of creative teaching approaches and inclusion of disadvantaged pupils in primary science lessons. You could even win one of five Amazon eGift vouchers for your time. Access the survey link here.

This term is when British Science Week takes place; on 10-19 March – and this year's theme is connections. Activity packs for Early Years and Primary can be downloaded and there's also the poster competition and more. The STEM Community (which you can join here) has a thread on Science day assembly ideas, which could be helpful if you are looking to plan something similar.

If you are looking for nice ideas that use simple equipment and are presented in a way that appeals to pupils, you will probably already be familiar with IOP Spark's Marvin & Milo collection. Not only are these bright colourful and engaging activities, but they also have a results and explanation, to help support teachers and suggested age ranges. And whilst on the topic of physics resources, CLEAPSS has a lovely new Electrical Components dominoes game where pupils match the component name (and picture) with its symbol.

Children love to gather facts: Science Sparks has collated a list (subdivided by topic) here, with the invitation to leave more in the comments. What a great idea for a class research activity. There are more here on the Science Kids website. Perhaps this could even become a science week challenge?

Sarah Longshaw
SLP Lead

Upcoming CPD

Spring Term

Don't forget our remote twilight Preparing for Science Week | STEM on 31 January. A session to promote and allow discussion of planning for science week. Discuss the importance of engagement in science and how to enhance this within your setting.

Science through stories – 16 February – remote twilight. Explore the science hidden in a book and incorporate science into your literacy lessons, stimulating further interest in the subject. You will walk away with engaging and practical ways to teach science using stories.

Leading Primary STEM online conference – 24 March – remote
Keynote: Teaching children to build better scientific questions – Tina Whittaker plus choice of workshops.

Working scientifically: discussion, questions, and stories as a stimulus –30 March afternoon, F2F Winsford Academy. We will use stories as a stimulus to support the teaching of science and to help pupils to come up with questions to investigate.

Summer Term

Developing your primary science using the Ofsted framework –8 June & 6 July, remote afternoons. Discuss key strategies to ensure that the intent, implementation, and impact of your science curriculum is evident throughout school.

The most up to date info and booking links can be found here: Science Learning Partnership (fallibroometrust.com). To enquire about bespoke support please email slp@fallibroometrust.com