Play & Learning Newsletter

29th Nov – 3rd Dec 2021

**Snoring, sneezes, storm, hibernation, lair, blustery, nocturnal, tripod**

Wonder words to use with your child:

This week we have used the story ‘Bear Snores On’ with the children, continuing with our focus on darkness and light. The children have loved this story and have been using the ideas from it in their imaginative play. We have had lots of grumpy bears showing how cross they are from being woken up – and lots of campfire parties around a super tripod and teapot lent to us by Isambard’s mum (thank you Katy!).

The story has led to talk about hibernation and what this means, finding out about other animals that hibernate and talk about whether the children would like to hibernate or be nocturnal. The Flying Fish have been voting for which they would prefer, which stimulated some great mathematical talk about quantities and comparing them.

The children have also been enjoying the challenge of creating lairs for their bears which are dark and cosy. This has encouraged them to come up with ideas, problem solve and use previous experiences to support new ones – all very important learning behaviours. We have had lots of bears to choose from and it’s been very interesting to observe the children’s thought processes as they chose which bear to use and then how to build the ‘lair’ to fit them. Just the type of active thinking that we like to see!

Possibly the most exciting thing to happen all week though was the arrival of Elvis the Elf, fresh from the North Pole, to learn how to be kind and caring, just like the children are to everyone in the pre-school crew. He is a bit cheeky though and has already set them a few puzzles and challenges!

***Sounds and Letters/language focus:*** This week the Flying Fish have moved on to ‘alliteration’ and the skill of recognising when words begin with the same sound – another tricky job for their little ears to develop! The children have had to work out which presents we can give to the bear from the story – but they can only be presents which begin with the same sound as ‘bear’. They have also been off to the zoo on the bus, picking up different animals which have escaped – again, all beginning with the same letters sound. At the moment it is very much ‘teaching’ and modelling to the children this new concept but we shall be focusing on it for the next few weeks so that they can begin to use this skill independently. This is a skill that you can support your child with at home by drawing their attention to when names in the family begin with the same sound or you are eat food that begins with the same sound as your name, e.g. marshmallow Mummy, sausage Sam etc.



The Starfish have developed their language skills through acting out the story and using their thinking skills to come up with different ways of waking up the bear (which they really enjoyed!).

 **Out & About sessions:** This week we went used different areas in Illogan Woods to provide different opportunities for the children to use different skills. On Monday we were explorers off on an adventure. We walked all the way through the woods and looked out for all the things that the wind had done over the weekend, during the storm. We found 3 trees that had blown down and so many branches! We started on the low path and then climbed the climbing bank (where the swing used to be) all the way up to the high path – it was very exciting!

On Tuesday, due to less favourable weather conditions, we went on a Bear Hunt in the area that we call ‘The Clearing’. The children had to hunt for photos of different bears that they then described to their friends. We also practised lots of physical skills such as balancing and jumping whilst we played on all of the natural resources in that area.

Thursday saw us at Greenfield Gardens for a game of The Honeypot and exploring the effects of the windy weather on our bodies and our rainbow ribbons.

Ideas to support your child at home:

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| The children have loved our new member of the pre-school crew – Elvis the Elf! He sometimes leaves a little note, challenge or secret symbol for the children to find around the setting – supporting their visual recognition of symbols (a skill that will support their understanding of the importance of letters and numerals later on). Often he does something which is a bit cheeky. Ask your child what Elvis has been up to today when you pick them up as a way into getting them to talk about their day at pre-school (which most children aren’t always that keen to do!). |