Year 3 Autumn 1:
What does it take to be an explorer?

What we are reading: Varjak Paw

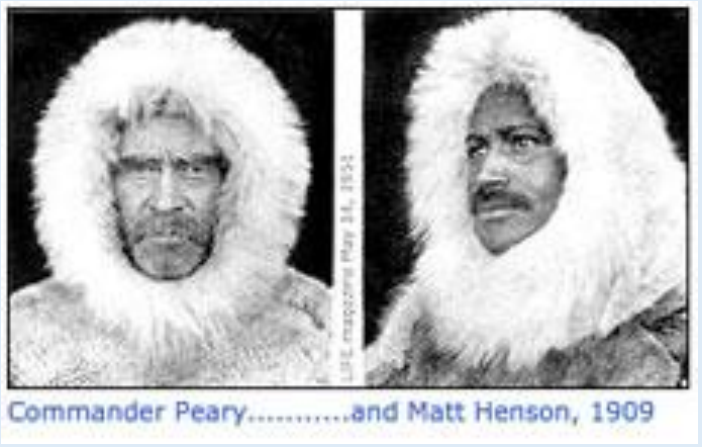
Varjak Paw is an award-winning story written by S.F. Said about a cat called Varjak who has to journey from his home to an unknown city where he has a series of adventures.

We will write a diary entry from the perspective of Varjak and about some of the events in the story. We will also use our imaginations and the books descriptions to write our own setting description full of rich language.

What we are writing:	Diary entry, setting description

Important people or places:

Matthew Henson & Robert Peary
Countries in Europe


Commander Peary.....and Matt Henson, 1909

Geography, Art, Modern Foreign Languages, Religion and Worldviews, Music, PSHE

As geographers, we will explore how to use different types of map to find information. We will learn about the 7 continents of the world and identify key geographical features in Europe. Using the knowledge gained from using maps, we will attempt to create our own map of the school playground. We will also meet a real-life explorer who will talk about his experiences and will lead some workshops on orienteering and map reading.





In PSHE, our focus is to help build friendships and establish rules and routines. We will explore what healthy relationships look like and how to deal with disagreements at school when or if they arise. We will also explore online safety in depth to ensure that the children know how to stay safe online.

As musicians, we will be learning about interrelated musical elements including pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo and dynamics. They will explore these through singing games and rhymes and start to transfer their musical knowledge to percussion instruments including hands drums, claves and boom-whackers.

As linguists, we will learn some greetings, ask and answer 'how are you?' [comment allez-vous?] and 'what is your name?' [comment t'appelles-tu?]. We will also count to ten and learn colours in French too.

Humanities Vocabulary	Definition
Cartography	The art and science of creating a map or chart of a geographical area.
Topography	Description of the physical features of an area. It often records various elevations.
Hemisphere	Half of a sphere. Used to divide the Earth into Northern and Southern halves.
Equator	The imaginary line that runs around the middle of the Earth and is the division of the Northern and Southern hemispheres.
Climate	The average weather conditions for a particular location over a long period of time.

Religion and Worldviews: How do people express commitment to a religion/worldview in different ways?

We will explore the idea of commitment. We will identify situations in which we have shown commitment to something, before learning how Christians, Jews and Sikhs show commitment to their religions.



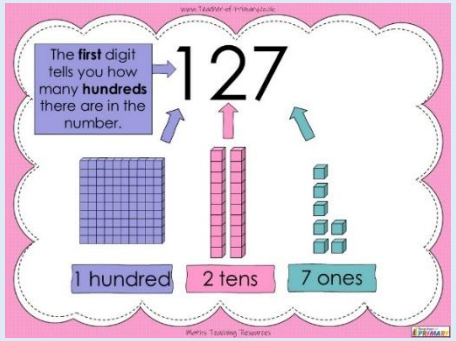


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As mathematicians, we will learn about number and place value to build up confidence. We will learn to identify, read and write 3-digit numbers and understand the value of each digit.

We will learn to compare and order numbers. Using a variety of concrete and pictorial representations, we will learn to add and subtract 3-digit numbers. We will learn about the process of exchanging, when crossing a tens or hundreds boundary.



Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM): Computing, Design Technology, Math, PE, Science

As computer scientists, we will spend the half-term ensuring that the children know how to interact with technology safely. We will thing about e-safety and what type of information is acceptable to share online. We will look at the benefits of device free time and will introduce the idea of being a positive digital citizen.

As scientists, we will explore light. We will learn what a light source is and understand how light is reflected from a surface. We will learn about the eye and how light helps us to see. We will also learn about shadows and the dangers of UV radiation.

As sportspeople, we are focusing on dance in P.E. We will work with partners to create our own dances and ensure that they can be repeat in unison. We will use dynamic and expressive qualities and use counts to keep in time.

STEM Vocabulary	Definition
Numbers	Numbers are made up of digits and have a 'value'.
Digits	Digits are the symbols by which a number is represented.
Place Value	The value represented by a digit in a number depending on its position in that number. For example, in the number 2**5**1 – the digit 5 represents 50.
Light	A form of energy that travels in a wave from a source.
Reflective	A word to describe something which reflects light well.
Translucent	Let some light through but scatters the light so we cannot see through them properly.
Transparent	Objects that let light travel through them meaning you can see through the object.
Opaque	Describes objects that do not let any light pass through them.

Optional Activities:

Whilst we don't set any homework at Avenue Junior School, we are passionate about reading and therefore ask that your child reads for at least 10 minutes a day. Your child has a reading record, where we would like them and adults to record what they are reading – if you are unsure how to use this, please ask your child's teacher! The benefits of this are wide ranging and can be felt across the curriculum.

It can be nice to do some additional activities at home linked to our work in school and so below we've given a few suggestions of activities you might like to try:

- **Explorer's survival sculpture** – use recycled materials (boxes, foil, bottles, string) to build a model of an explorer's tool or shelter. For example, it could be a sled for an Arctic explorer, or a climbing tower that Varjak Paw might need.
- **Family expedition journal** – keep a small diary of "explorations" done at home or in the neighbourhood (for example, a new park, cooking a new recipe or discovering wildlife in the garden). Write in short explorer-style entries, as if they were Arctic notes or Varjak's secret mission log.
- **Map-making challenge** – draw a map of their house or local area, marking "danger zones" and "safe zones" as if you were an explorer. Add a key with symbols for obstacles, safe camps, or treasure spots.
- **Cold-weather test** – with help from your family, place an ice cube in a bowl and experiment with different materials (towel, foil, paper, plastic bag) to see which keeps it frozen the longest. Record findings like a scientist-explorer testing survival gear.
- **Arctic feast** – research what explorers eat to survive. As a family, create a simple "explorer snack" (trail mix, dried fruit, flapjacks). Design packaging with a name and label for their snack, ready for the journey!
- **Courage collage** – *cr*eate an art piece (drawing, collage, or painting) showing what courage looks like to them as an explorer. It could show Varjak facing a new challenge, or an explorer battling difficult conditions!

ClassDojo:

We love to see the work children and families have been doing at home.

Please send pictures or videos to your teacher using ClassDojo and we will make sure that these are celebrated in class!

Likewise, if children have any notable achievements or events outside of school (swimming medals, football tournaments etc), we love to hear about these too!

ClassDojo