

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

What we've been up to this month.....

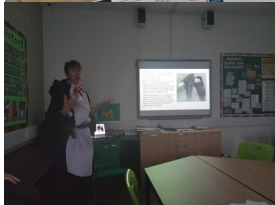
World Book Day on 7th March was celebrated at each of our schools.

At **Phoenix** they really wanted the students to get to know the library and also to see just how much diversity there is in the books we have on offer.

We bought a scratch map and set to finding books from around the world. We placed flags inside each book and on World Book Day itself the young people took part in a book scavenger hunt. When they found a flag inside a book, they scratched the country off the map which we then turned into a display so that everyone can see how diverse our library is – and pinpoint which books have representation of specific countries and cultures.



Students were also able to point out where we were lacking in literature from countries, helping us to diversify our literary offer even further. We have ordered 33 new books from all over the world as a result – from Antarctica to Zimbabwe. It was great to see the students of Phoenix School working together as a team, getting to grips with the library and looking at books they might never have picked up before.



Students also embarked on a journey around the world of poetry, with an interactive session themed around animal poetry and their native countries. This was a huge hit, possibly as it was delivered by a giant penguin (Julie), and staff and young people alike enjoyed reciting poetry and trying to memorise "The Tyger".

At **Summit** staff dressed up as Fairy Tale characters as part of our theme of **Magic March**.



Our Young People were able to match traditional illustrations of the characters to us. They also had the opportunity to use their artistic skills by creating their own illustrations for their favourite book or a Fairy Tale and creating mindfulness book marks. In addition, they also participated in a scavenger hunt in the library similar to Phoenix, developing their exploration of a range of exciting books.

Some young people also took the opportunity to read for pleasure and discuss their favourite stories.

At **Excel and Exceed** students participated in **drop everything and read sessions throughout the day** and engaged in discussing the weekly article - which focussed on the £1 book initiative.

Additionally, students were encouraged to engage with an art session in which they could paint a bookmark with their name on it in the style of the portrait artists that we have been researching this term.

We ended up with some really beautiful pieces which were laminated and returned to the young people for personal use in their future reading ventures.



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This year, the theme for **British Science Week (8-17 March)** was 'Time' during which each of our schools have embraced the theme in different ways.

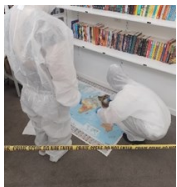
Excel & Exceed observed this with a variety of activities and discussions. A daily article was completed by staff in relation to the **concept of time** and in addition to this an exploration into the **history of time** was conducted. The use of water clocks and later sundials were researched and considered, however, the turn of the millennium presents us with a new alternative and one student suggested "just check your phone!" In addition, they are **investigating the time it takes for plants to grow**. This opened the opportunity to discuss the various independent variables that can affect plant growth such as soil quality, amount of water and light.



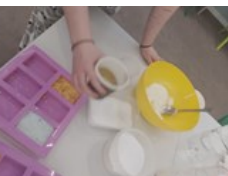
They have been getting their fingers dirty planting spring onions and tomatoes and will be looking at how light affects plant growth over the next few weeks. For those studying biology we will be using this as part of the lessons to explore phototropism (the orientation of plants towards the light) and plotting graphs to represent the growth over the following weeks. Hopefully we will be getting in some yummy spring onions and tomatoes too that can be used for cooking sessions!



At Summit young people got involved in a CSI activity day and made bath bombs.



The CSI activity day was run by Think forensic which included solving a mystery crime in the school. Our young people were able to make copies of their fingerprints using different techniques, make shoe impressions and use all of the techniques discussed throughout the session to help solve a small crime!



In addition to this, young people got involved in other science activities which involved making bath bombs using their favourite essential oils and designing their own posters for the science week poster competition on their interpretation on 'Time' which was this year's Science theme!



At **Phoenix** we investigated the time taken for our heart rate to return to resting after completing exercise – some staff were a bit perturbed to see us jumping and skipping up and down the corridor albeit nobody chose to waddle like a duck for a minute however despite us having ducks in the library!

We also tried to predict the time it would take for the tops of carrots to start to grow shoots – in a few days we had green tops which looked like mini-palm trees. The time for an avocado seed to sprout roots or shoots seems to be considerably longer – we're still waiting – will it ever happen? Some YP looked at the length of time it took various radioactive elements to decay by half – known as their half-life. They then attempted to do various activities in a certain length of time (which corresponded to the mass number of the elements). Could you make a paper aeroplane in 11 seconds? Our YP can and they can stand on one leg for 123 seconds – this was more challenging for some than others but they were determined to do it.



British Science week is a good time to introduce the CREST Awards. Four of our YP have decided to take up the challenge of gaining a Bronze CREST Award. CREST is the British Science Association's flagship education programme for young people, providing science enrichment activities to inspire and engage 3-to-19-year-olds.

Engineering: Our young people at Sheffield were set a challenge to see who could build the tallest tower out of dried spaghetti and marshmallows: not as easy as it sounds! The spaghetti was very fragile and kept breaking, whilst the marshmallows were (unsurprisingly) very sticky. Despite all these issues, our young people rose to the challenge with one person creating a structure over one metre high!



Living Eggs Project: As part of our celebration of British Science Week, the Phoenix School incubated and hatched ducklings. Our eggs came from the Incredible Eggs Company who pride themselves on providing high welfare, ethical hatching kits to schools, nurseries and care homes. Incredible Eggs describe ducklings as "A real 'confidence giver' to those unused to handling and caring for animals" and this could not have turned out to be truer! Some of our students expressed a love for animals, but a fear of accidentally hurting them. With a window of 10 days to build up their confidence, we saw these once wary young people become comfortable around holding and looking after the ducklings. The most wonderful part of the ten days was seeing the joy and serenity that nurturing the young ducks brought to our young people.

