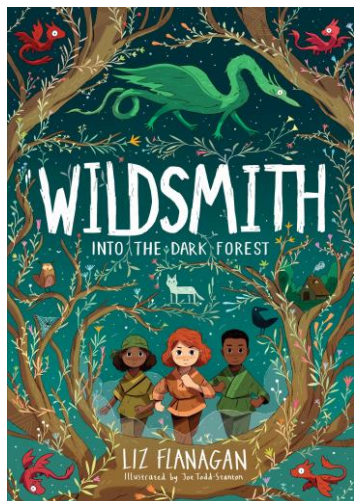




Wildsmith



Why this particular book and not something else?

We have carefully chosen Wildsmith: into the dark forest as our beautiful text to start the year due to the wonderful imagery created by Liz Flanagan and its link to our key value: Kindness. The characters she has created warm our hearts with their dedication to saving the world around them, with Flanagan truly creating a magical world that invites you inside – almost a medieval fairytale with a mysterious forest beyond. The language she uses helps you join Rowan on her journey of self-discovery, and helps our young readers find all of the qualities you need in a good friend in Rowan. The plot is enticing and helps our young readers to appreciate the value of characterisation, including heroes and villains, within a modern fairytale approach.

School values this book reinforces:

Whilst this is truly a heart-warming tale of friendship, loyalty, overcoming adversities and resilience, the key value within the text is kindness. The Wildsmith – the healer – passes on his gift to his granddaughter, who rescues dragons, stops poachers and ultimately finds her own identity in the forest that they call home.

Writing Composition in school:

Re-writing the scene where the dragon eggs hatch gives the children an opportunity to use all of the skills mentioned below. Teachers will be assessing your child's level of basic accuracy first and their use of phrases. Teachers will consider how the children have absorbed our key vocabulary and the active language choices they have made as well as the topic-specific language discussed in the unit.

Skills that will be developed through this unit:

Before introducing new skills, Y4 spend some time reinforcing the basics to ensure that the children can maintain basic accuracy as their sentences become longer and more embellished with detail. We look at noun phrases (the tiny, ruby dragon), prepositional phrases (in the forest) and adverbial phrases (late last night) to enhance our sentences. Children learn about pronouns and we begin to be more specific in our identification of pronouns. For example, his/hers are pronouns but they are possessive pronouns. I and me are personal pronouns. In this half term, children also explore past and present tenses – again they need to be more specific and say if a sentence is past progressive (was playing) or past perfect (had played).

Throughout the unit, new vocabulary is introduced and Y4 children learn to be more specific in their language choices, especially when creating magical setting descriptions and creative character depictions. They will apply their knowledge of the noun phrases and adverbs to emulate Flanagan's own creations and wild descriptions.





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Writing Homework

Here is an overview of each written homework task for this half term. Over this half term, your child should aim to complete some writing at home each week. The time they invest in their written homework will vary from child to child – parental discretion is advised. Alternatively, you may wish to focus on just one or two of these activities and develop them over several weeks with your child.

In our new book, Wildsmith, Rowan climbed the tower. She lives near a forest. Draw a picture of what she might see from the top of the tower looking out towards the forest.

Watch a BBC wildlife programme. Listen to what David Attenborough says exactly. Can you write his words down? Think carefully about where basic punctuation would go. You will probably need to keep rewinding the scene so that you can listen to it in manageable chunks. To expand this, you could write your own version of a wildlife documentary and choose your own animal. Try to imitate some of the language used in the BBC documentary.

Rowan's grandad is a Wildsmith – a healer of magical creatures. Invent your own magical creature that her grandad could heal. Describe how Rowan's grandad might heal the creature.

In our book last week, the witches hatched a plan to trap the poachers. Design your own trap that the witches could set.

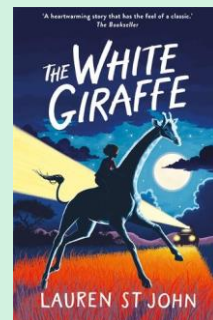
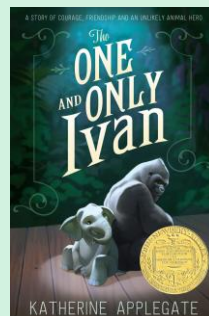
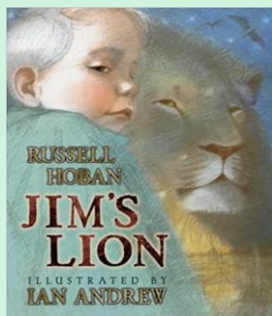
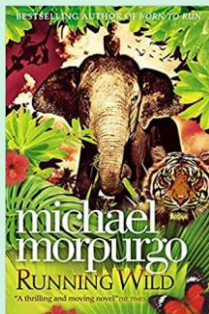
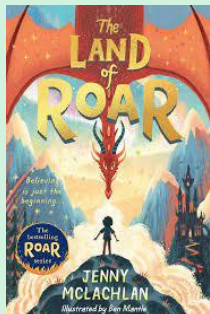
Create a fact-file about an endangered animal of your choice. You might want to look through some non-fiction books to see how they are organised. Think about which 'sections' you might want to include about your animal.

Make a poster to show how we can help and look after animals. You should include a bold heading, pictures, numbered instructions so that anyone can follow your ideas. Please also make it colourful and creative so we can put these up in the classroom!

Would you like to be a Wildsmith? Why? Share your reasons with your adults at home. Draw a picture as you as a Wildsmith. What equipment would you need? What would you wear?

Book Spine

To complement Wildsmith, our school can thoroughly recommend these texts for this half term:





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Book Title	What is it about?	What your teachers think about this book...
The Land of Roar by Jenny McLachlan	The new middle-grade fantasy that will make you believe in magic! When Arthur and Rose were little, they were heroes in the Land of Roar, an imaginary world that they found by climbing through the folding bed in their grandad's attic. Roar was filled with things they loved – dragons, mermaids, ninja wizards and adventure – as well as things that scared them (including a very creepy scarecrow. . .) Now the twins are eleven, Roar is just a memory. But when they help Grandad clean out the attic, Arthur is horrified as Grandad is pulled into the folding bed and vanishes. Is he playing a joke? Or is Roar . . . real?	When we read this book, we liked the imaginative content. It's magical, full of adventure, fantasy and some time travel too.
Running Wild By Micheal Morpurgo	The epic and heart-rending jungle adventure from the nation's favourite storyteller Michael Morpurgo. For Will and his mother, going to Indonesia isn't just a holiday. It's an escape, a new start, a chance to put things behind them – things like the death of Will's father. And to begin with, it seems to be just what they both needed. But then Oona, the elephant Will is riding on the beach, begins acting strangely, shying away from the sea. And that's when the tsunami comes crashing in, and Oona begins to run. Except that when the tsunami is gone, Oona just keeps on running. With nothing on his back but a shirt and nothing to sustain him but a bottle of water, Will must learn to survive deep in the jungle. Luckily, though, he's not completely alone...He's got Oona.	Year 4 love Michael Morpurgo! He writes many books and if you were to read them all, you'd spend your whole year only reading his books (and we encourage children's exploration of different authors rather than reading the same author – even if he is amazing!). However, this is one we would really recommend alongside Wildsmith
Jim's Lion By Russell Hoban	From the incomparable Russell Hoban comes a moving, unflinching tale of a boy who finds bravery during illness, beautifully re-imagined as a graphic-novel by award-winning illustrator Alexis Deacon. Asleep in his hospital bed, Jim dreams of a great lion with white teeth and amber eyes. This lion is Jim's finder. According to Nurse Bami, everyone has a finder, a creature who comes looking for us when we are lost. But when the time comes for Jim's operation, will his lion be able to find him and bring him safely home? With the inclusion of powerful dream sequences, and a triumphant message of facing one's fears, Russell Hoban's tale of a boy's search for strength and courage will resonate with any child dealing with adversity or sickness.	Facing your fears, search for strength and courage, adversity and sickness... This is very well written and would appeal to Year 4 children.
The One and Only Ivan	Winner of the Newbery Medal 2013 Inspired by a true story, this is the beautifully written tale of how a mighty gorilla wins his freedom. A winning blend of humour and poignancy that will appeal to fans of Michael Morpurgo. Ivan is an easy-going gorilla who has spent his life performing for the crowds at the Exit 8 shopping mall. He rarely misses life in the jungle. In fact, he hardly thinks about it at all. But everything changes when a baby elephant called Ruby arrives and Ivan realises he must find a new life for them both.	Deals with issues of bullying, self-confidence and friendship. Good characters and plot, similar style to Michael Morpurgo. We give this a thumbs up!

