



Case Study: What are the natural treasures of Belton House?

Curriculum links

- ☞ Communication and language: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs; they develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.
- ☞ Literacy: writing simple sentences which can be read by others; using critique children demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.
- ☞ Understanding the world: children talk about features of their immediate environment; make observations of animals and plants
- ☞ Expressive arts and design: they represent their own ideas, thoughts and feeling through art and stories.
- ☞ Personal, social and emotional development: children are confident to try new activities; work as part of a group; will talk about their ideas and choose the resources they need for their chosen activities; working co-operatively, taking into account another's ideas, needs and feelings.

Why this topic was chosen

One of Belton's local schools, Little Gonerby Infants School, was starting a process of using "REAL Projects" within their school pedagogy.

Meeting their curriculum and project aims the Reception teachers created this driving question. They wanted the children to learn about the trees and creatures, and to put their information into some form of information cards/ leaflets or trail that would then be available for families visiting the Discovery Centre during the summer holidays.

Year Group: Reception

What the teacher thought

"Many thanks for all your support for our project. We feel it was a great success and we were all very proud of it. It would not have been possible without your help - so thank you!"

What the children did

The children were introduced to the project by their teachers in the classroom before spending a day exploring the gardens of Belton House in May. The teachers chose to self-guide allowing the children to explore the grounds, seeing what they thought are the 'treasures' of Belton.

This then formed the structure for their learning over the next two terms - allowing the children to investigate the things that interest them.

On their second visit in July, the children created a small exhibition of their art work and writing for display in the Discovery Centre. This included a selection of trails and information cards that visiting families were able to use as they explored the gardens.

Families learning together

To launch the small exhibition that the children created, an open day for the children to bring their families was organised. This helped the children to share their work and guide their families around the gardens.

For this part of the project, we wanted to ensure that all families had the opportunity to engage with their children's work without the financial obstacle of admission fees. Because of this, for the Reception classes, we were able to arrange free entry for each Reception child (plus any siblings that also attend the school) with 1 adult per child for each family who pre-booked their attendance with the teachers.

Pupils unveil exhibit at Belton

Families joined their children from Little Gonerby Infant School for the opening of their exhibition at Belton House on Saturday.

Reception children from the Diamond class and Sapphire class have spent the last two terms studying the life cycles of butterflies and creating observational drawings of one of the different types of worms and butterflies that they have found.

Belton House staff showed their work on display in the discovery centre as a selection of leaflets and a gallery of art work in our yard. Reception class teachers and headteacher Hilton were on hand to help parents and visitors enjoy some time at Belton without the launch.

Amongst class teacher Jones said: "The launch was fabulous. Over two thirds of our reception families attended and many stayed to enjoy some time at Belton. A lot of the visitors couldn't believe that the work was done by four- and five-year-olds. We even had a visitor from Japan who chose one of our activities for their visit, which the children thought was very exciting."

It was the first time that many of the families had the opportunity to see their children's work and were excited to see their child with such an achievement. It was lovely to see proud parents and siblings, happy children bursting with their work to share it with the school.

Since the opening together has been a team at the school and Mrs. Jones would like to see their support and for enabling the