EYFS Cradley Nursery Curriculum Plan 27 – 28

We have new starters every half-term so our planning allows for individualised, not group, progression. Our weekly and in-the-moment planning is responsive to the interests and needs of individual children so, while we may incorporate seasonal of festival imagery, and themed stories and songs into our provision, our core focus is on supporting development in the Prime Areas of the EYFS for 2 – 3 year olds and on encouraging children to develop their own fascinations through their self-chosen play. We then develop children's understanding of the wider world through broad themes structing our planning once they move into their pre-school year.

	Autumn 1 2027	**Autumn 2 2027**	**Spring 1 2028**	**Spring 2 2028**	**Summer 1 2028**	**Summer 2 2028**
Topic These will be adapted and added to throughout the half-term to reflect and respond to the children's emerging interests, ensuring the curriculum remains flexible, child-led and meaningful.	**Traditional Tales**	**Transport and Travel**	**Wild Animals**	**Growing and Measuring**	**Knights and Castles**	**Under the Sea**
Seasons, Festivals, Trips and Events At Cradley Nursery, we follow a rich calendar of seasons, festivals, trips and special events that help bring learning to life for our children. These shared experiences deepen their understanding of the world around them, create meaningful memories, and provide natural opportunities for language development, creativity and curiosity. By celebrating seasonal changes, exploring cultural festivals, and taking part in visits and whole-nursery events, children build a strong sense of belonging and connection to our Cradley community.	• Autumn • Harvest • Harvest Church Festival • Pumpkin Patch trip	• Autumn/Winter • Bonfire Night • Diwali • Christmas • Nativity • Santa's Safari • Toddlers Christmas Party • Children in Need	• Winter • Chinese New Year • Reptomania	• Winter/Spring • Pancake Day • Mother's Day • Easter • Toddlers Easter Egg Hunt • World Book Day • St David's Day • Easter Church Service • Red Nose Day	• Spring • Sports Day • Eastnor Castle trip	• Summer • Father's Day • Three Counties Trip • Sea life centre trip
Core Texts At Cradley Nursery, we have selected a range of Core Texts for children to enjoy and revisit throughout their	• The Ugly Duckling • The Three Little Pigs • Jack and The Beanstalk • Goldilocks and The Three Bears	• The Runaway Train • We catch the bus • Lost and found • Little Red Train • Duck in the Truck	• Elmer • Rumble in the Jungle • The Ugly Five • Giraffes can't Dance • Monkey Puzzle	• Jasper's Beanstalk • The Growing Story • The Very Hungry Caterpillar • Is It a Seed?	• There's a Dragon in your book • The Princess and The Wizard	• Bright Stanley • The Snail and the Whale • Shark in the Park • Barry the Fish with Fingers • Tiddler

time with us. These carefully chosen books help foster a love of stories, support children in building a rich bank of tales they can retell, and provide meaningful links across all areas of learning.	• Little Red Riding Hood • Three Billy Goats Gruff • The Gingerbread Man • The Princess and The Pea	• Whatever Next • Zoom, Rocket, Zoom	• Handa's Surprise	• The Rhyming Rabbit	• The Knight who wouldn't fight • Zog • Princess Mirror-Belle and the Dragon Pox • The Princess and the pea	• Pirates Love Underpants • Sharing a Shell
Core Nursery Rhymes At Cradley Nursery, we have chosen a collection of Core Nursery Rhymes for children to enjoy and revisit throughout their time with us. These well-loved rhymes help nurture a joy of music and rhythm, support early language development, and give children a shared bank of songs they can join in with confidently. Our chosen rhymes also provide rich opportunities for cross-curricular learning, from early maths and movement to communication and imaginative play.	• Gingerbread Man on the run • Poor Little Baby Bear • Into the brick house • Jack's Giant • Hungry wolf song • Big bad troll	• A Sailor went to sea, sea, sea • Row, row, row your boat • The Big Ship • Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer • The Wheels on the Bus	• Five Little Monkeys • Down in the Jungle • Old MacDonald's Jungle Song • Five Little Speckled Frogs	• Oats and Beans and Barley Grow • Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush • Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary • Round and Round the Garden	• Baa Baa Black Sheep • Goosey Goosey Gander • H umpty Dumpty	• A Sailor went to sea, sea, sea • Row, row, row your boat • The Big Ship • Baby Shark • Five Little Fishes • The Waves in the Sea Go Up and Down • I Had a Little Turtle • Ring a Ring O'Roses
Core Vocabulary At Cradley Nursery, we have identified a set of Core Vocabulary that children will encounter regularly throughout their time with us. These carefully chosen words support early language development, strengthen children's understanding of key concepts, and help them communicate confidently during play and learning. By revisiting this vocabulary across topics, routines and experiences, children build a secure bank of meaningful words that they can use, apply and deepen as they grow.	• bear • pig • wolf • giant • girl • bed • chair • house • forest • porridge • big • small • hot • cold • run • stop • open • close • help • sleep	• car • bus • train • boat • plane • bike • truck • wheel • road • track • bridge • stop • go • fast • slow • up • down • on • off • beep	• lion • tiger • elephant • monkey • giraffe • zebra • bear • snake • crocodile • roar • big • small • fast • slow • jungle • forest • water • run • jump • eat	• seed • plant • flower • leaf • stem • soil • water • sun • grow • tall • small • big • pot • dig • pour • wet • dry • green • roots • sprout	• castle • tower • gate • bridge (drawbridge) • knight • king • queen • horse • shield • sword • helmet • dragon • big • small • up • down • open • close • run • brave	• fish • crab • shark • whale • octopus • jellyfish • turtle • sea • water • sand • shell • wave • big • small • blue • swim • splash • float • under • on top
Ambitious Vocabulary	• character • setting	• vehicle • journey	• habitat • camouflage	• germinate • seedling	• medieval • kingdom	• creature • habitat

At Cradley Nursery, we introduce children to a carefully selected range of Ambitious Vocabulary that enriches their language and deepens their understanding of the world. These words are chosen to challenge and extend children's communication skills, helping them to express ideas with increasing confidence and precision. By embedding ambitious vocabulary across stories, play, routines and topics, children encounter meaningful language in context and begin to use it independently as their speech and understanding grow.	• cottage • forest • creature • enchanted • brave • fierce • mischievous • gigantic • delicious • dangerous • escape • discover • journey • problem • solution • strong • fragile • growl	• destination • route • passenger • pilot • conductor • engine • runway • platform • traffic • emergency vehicle • navigation • map • direction • speed • fuel • float • sink • transportation	• predator • prey • nocturnal • endangered • powerful • agile • enormous • slither • pounce • stomp • roam • tropical • savannah • fur • scales • claws • tusk • wildlife	• predict • observe • measure • estimate • compare • taller • shorter • longer • shorter • healthy • wilt • nutrients • environment • lifecycle • harvest • record • change • investigate	• armour • chainmail • shield • helmet • drawbridge • moat • dungeon • turret • quest • bravery • battle • protect • charge • gallop • royal • feast • scroll • castle grounds	• ocean • coral • tentacles • fins • gills • camouflage • float • sink • deep • shallow • current • wave • protect • endangered • predator • prey • explore • discover
Little Wandle Phonics **2 -3 Year Olds –** For this age group it is appropriate to focus on developing listening skills and sound differentiation through the repetition by practitioners and through stories, songs and instrument exploration. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** To provide the building blocks for Phase 2 phonics at school; introduction Little Wandle 'pure sounds'.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • Environmental Sounds **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • Environmental Sounds **LWP Sounds:** Rhyme time & routines	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • Instrumental Sounds **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • Instrumental Sounds **LWP Sounds:** s, a, t, p, i, n, m	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • Body Percussion **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • Body Percussion **LWP Sounds:** d, g, o, c, k, e	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • Environmental Sounds **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • Rhythm and Rhyme **LWP Sounds:** u, r, h, b, f, l	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • Instrumental Sounds **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • Alliteration **LWP Sounds:** j, v, w, y, z, qu, ch	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • Body Percussion **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • Voice Sounds • Segmenting and Blending **LWP Sounds:** ck, x, sh, th, ng, nk
Personal, Social and Emotional Development • **Making Relationships** • **Sense of Self** • **Understanding Emotions** Personal, Social and Emotional Development is woven throughout the half-termly topic, supporting children to build confidence, develop relationships and understand their own	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Explore the Nursery environment -** Children explore story-themed areas such as the Three Bears' cottage or the Three Little Pigs' houses, helping them become confident moving around the environment and discovering familiar characters and props. • **Interact with confidence while their Key Person is close by -** With their Key	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Enjoys playing alone and alongside others -** Transport play (cars, buses, trains, boats) encourages children to play independently with vehicles while also playing alongside others on shared tracks, roads or small-world layouts. • **Will often watch, follow and imitate others in their play -** Children observe	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Asserts their own ideas and preferences -** Children choose which wild animals they want to play with, decide how they should move (stomp like an elephant, roar like a lion) and express clear preferences for favourite creatures, strengthening confidence and autonomy. • **On occasions withdraw from social engagement**	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Builds relationships with special people -** Children form trusting relationships with adults as they plant seeds together, water plants or check growth. Shared routines help them feel secure and connected. • **Show anxiety towards strangers -** Growing activities provide calm, predictable experiences that help children feel safe.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Shows some understanding that others have different ideas and needs -** Children begin to recognise that friends may want different castle characters or roles (king, knight, dragon), learning to share space and adapt their play to others' ideas. • **Shows care and concern for others -** Castle play encourages gentle	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Begins to be able to co-operate in favourable situations -** Children begin to cooperate during simple ocean play, such as sharing sea creatures, taking turns with water trays or helping place fish into the "coral reef," showing early willingness to work alongside others. • **Seeks out others to chare experiences with -**

feelings within meaningful, familiar contexts. The topic provides opportunities for children to share experiences, take turns, work alongside others and develop empathy as they explore characters, scenarios and real-life situations linked to the theme. Through high-quality interactions and carefully planned provision, children learn to express their needs, manage small conflicts and make independent choices. The topic also helps children recognise what makes them unique and feel a sense of belonging within the group. By embedding PSED across the theme, children develop the emotional security, social skills and self-awareness that underpin all areas of learning.	Person nearby, children join in simple role-play (e.g., pretending to stir porridge or knock on a cottage door), building confidence to take part in shared storytelling. • **Shows empathy for others -** Traditional Tales provide clear emotional moments (e.g., Baby Bear feeling sad, the Gingerbread Man feeling scared), helping children begin to recognise and respond to characters' feelings through play. • **Aware of physical characteristics -** Children notice and talk about features of characters (big bear/small bear, long ears/short ears), supporting early comparison and descriptive language. • **Can point to bodily features e.g. nose or eyes -** Using puppets and story characters, children point to and name features ("Where are the wolf's eyes?"), strengthening early body-part vocabulary. • **Expresses positive and negative feelings through actions, behaviours and a few words -** Traditional Tales offer opportunities to act out simple emotions (happy like Goldilocks, cross like the Troll), helping children express feelings safely through movement and words. • **Expresses positive feelings such ss joy and negative feeling such as anger through actions, behaviours and a few words -** Repeated story phrases and predictable events support children to show emotions in context, such as laughing when the	peers pushing cars, filling petrol pumps or boarding toy buses, then copy these actions, learning through imitation in a meaningful travel context. • **Experiments what their bodies can do -** Travel-themed movement (flying like aeroplanes, rolling like wheels, marching like passengers) helps children explore balance, speed and whole-body actions. • **Begins to use me, you and I in their talk -** Role-play journeys ("I drive the bus", "You sit here") support children to use early pronouns naturally as they take on simple travel roles. • **Experiences a wide range of feelings with great intensity which can be overwhelming -** Travel stories and small-world play allow children to explore big emotions such as excitement, frustration or surprise (e.g., waiting for a train, a car crash in play), helping them begin to recognise and express feelings safely. • **Is aware of others' feelings and is beginning to show empathy -** When a toy passenger "falls over" or a friend's car "breaks", children begin to show early empathy by offering help, sharing vehicles or comforting others during shared travel play. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Shows more consideration of other's needs -** Travel play encourages turn-taking and awareness of others, such	**and become frustrated -** Wild-animal play can feel exciting or overwhelming. Children may step back when the play becomes too loud or busy, or show frustration when animals are taken or when their play is interrupted. Adults support them to re-join when ready. • **Shows a growing sese of self through their likes and dislikes -** Children begin to express strong likes and dislikes about animals—"I like the giraffe", "No tiger"—helping them develop a clearer sense of identity and personal preference within the topic. • **Is aware of others feelings and beginning to show empathy -** Through simple animal-care play (feeding the animals, comforting a "sad" monkey, helping a friend whose animal has fallen), children begin to notice others' emotions and respond with early empathy. • **Asserts their own agenda strongly and displays frustration at having to comply with others agendas -** When peers direct the play ("Let's all be monkeys") or take control of the animals, children may resist or become upset. Wild-animal scenarios provide natural opportunities to practise compromise, take turns and begin to understand that others also have ideas. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Practices skills of assertion, negotiation and compromise -** Wild-animal role play naturally	Familiar adults support them when new people join the activity, reducing anxiety through gentle reassurance. • **Separates from carers and explores new environments -** Exploring outdoor spaces to look for growing plants or measure natural objects encourages children to move away from their key person with confidence, knowing they can return when needed. • **Knows their own name, preferences and interests -** Children choose their favourite plants to grow, select tools they prefer and express likes and dislikes about textures, smells or colours, strengthening self-awareness. • **Develops an understanding of differences -** Children notice that plants grow at different speeds, look different or need different care. They begin to understand variation and difference in living things. • **Expresses emotions of pride and embarrassment -** Children show pride when their plant grows or when they successfully water or measure something. They may show embarrassment if their plant grows more slowly or if they spill water, learning to manage these early self-aware emotions. • **Can feel overwhelmed by intense emotions resulting in an emotional collapse -** Growing activities offer calming, sensory experiences—watering, touching soil, watching changes—that help soothe	interactions, such as "helping" a friend's knight, comforting a toy dragon or supporting peers during role-play rescues, strengthening early empathy. • **Shows a sense of autonomy through asserting ideas and making choices -** Children choose their own castle props, characters or building materials, asserting preferences such as "I want the shield" or "My knight goes here," building confidence in decision-making. • **Experiments with their own views through play -** Castle role play allows children to test ideas—trying out being brave knights, kind queens or noisy dragons—experimenting with different roles and perspectives in a safe, imaginative space. • **Is becoming able to think about their feelings and manage their emotions -** Children begin to talk about feelings during castle play ("The dragon is sad," "I'm scared of the roar"), helping them recognise emotions and practise calming strategies. • **Seeks comfort from familiar adult when needs and distract themselves when upset -** When castle play becomes overwhelming or noisy, children look to familiar adults for reassurance and can be gently redirected to quieter castle activities such as building towers or exploring props.	Under-the-sea activities encourage children to invite friends to join in—watching bubbles together, exploring shells, or playing with sea-themed small-worlds—strengthening social connection. • **Slowly learns that actions have consequences -** Children begin to understand simple cause-and-effect, such as noticing that splashing water makes others wet or that knocking over the "rock pool" upsets the play, helping them recognise the impact of their actions. • **Responds to the feelings of others, showing concern and comfort -** When a friend becomes upset during water play or loses a sea creature, children show early empathy by offering comfort or sharing resources. • **Begins to recognise some actions can hurt others and begins to stop themselves from doing it -** Through gentle reminders during ocean play, children start to understand that splashing too hard or pushing near the water tray can hurt others, and begin to stop themselves. • **Participates more in collective cooperation as their experiences of routines and boundaries grows -** Group activities such as feeding the "big fish," tidying the rock pool or helping refill the water tray support children to cooperate within familiar routines and boundaries. • **Responds to the feelings of others -** Children notice when peers feel excited,

	Gingerbread Man runs away or showing "angry" faces like the Big Bad Wolf. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Seeks out companionship with adults and other children -** Traditional Tales encourage children to join others in role-play, retelling and small-world story scenes. Working together as characters (e.g., the Three Bears, the Billy Goats Gruff) helps them build friendships and confidently seek out social interaction. • **Uses past experiences to guide their social interactions -** When children recognise familiar story problems (e.g., someone feeling left out, someone making a wrong choice), they draw on their own experiences to decide how characters might act. This supports thoughtful turn-taking, sharing and problem-solving in play. • **Shows awareness of similarities and differences -** Traditional Tales offer clear contrasts between characters (big/small, kind/unkind, brave/scared). Children compare characters' actions and appearances, helping them talk about similarities and differences in a meaningful, story-based context. • **Sensitive to others criticism -** Story moments where characters feel upset or judged (e.g., Goldilocks being discovered, the Gingerbread Man being chased) help children explore these emotions	as waiting for a friend to "board the bus", sharing vehicles or helping someone load passengers, supporting thoughtful and cooperative behaviour. • **Shows gradually more impulse control in favourable conditions -** Predictable travel routines (stop/go, waiting at the "station", following traffic lights) help children practise stopping, waiting and controlling their actions within a structured, playful context. • **Enjoys being involved in daily tasks -** Children take on purposeful roles such as ticket collector, driver, mechanic or luggage helper. These simple responsibilities build independence and pride in contributing to shared play. • **Is aware of being evaluated by others -** When showing how they can "drive safely", follow road signs or organise a journey, children become aware that adults and peers notice their efforts, helping them develop confidence and self-awareness. • **Talks about how others might be feeling and responds according to their understanding -** Travel scenarios naturally prompt empathy: noticing when a friend is "left behind", comforting someone whose car has crashed, or recognising excitement when arriving at a destination. • **Is more able to recognise the impact of their choices and behaviours/actions on others -** Children begin to	encourages children to share ideas about who will be which animal, how the animals will move, and what will happen in the "story". They practise asserting their own ideas ("I want to be the lion"), negotiating roles ("You can be the tiger and I'll be the cheetah"), and compromising when needed ("Let's both be monkeys and swing together"). These shared imaginative scenarios help children develop confidence, cooperation and early conflict-resolution skills. • **Enjoys playing alone, alongside and with others -** Children choose whether to explore wild-animal play independently (sorting animals, building habitats), play alongside others in small-world jungles, or join group role-play as a herd or pack. They learn to shift between solitary and shared play with growing confidence. • **Shows confidence by becoming more outgoing towards new people and in new social situations -** Wild-animal themes encourage children to share their knowledge ("I know where lions live"), join new groups in role-play and approach unfamiliar adults to talk about animals, strengthening social confidence in a motivating context • **Takes risks and able to express their needs and ask adults for help -** Children take safe risks as they climb like monkeys, balance like flamingos or crawl through "tunnels".	children when emotions become overwhelming. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Represents and recreates what they've learnt from social interactions -** Children act out growing routines they've seen—watering plants, checking growth charts, caring for seedlings—showing how they recreate shared experiences with adults and peers. • **Develops particular friendships with others -** Working together to plant seeds, compare growth or measure heights encourages children to form close friendships through shared goals and cooperative tasks. • **Recognises that they belong to different communities and social groups -** Children begin to understand that everyone contributes differently to growing projects—garden helpers, seed monitors, water carriers—strengthening their sense of belonging within the nursery community. • **Is aware of their relationships to particular social groups -** Through group planting or measuring activities, children notice who they work well with, who shares similar interests and how they fit within small peer groups. • **Understands their own and other people's feelings -** Children recognise emotions linked to growing—pride when a plant grows tall, disappointment when a seed doesn't	• **Is becoming able to think about their feelings -** Children start to reflect on simple emotions linked to play—feeling proud of a tall tower, frustrated when a gate falls, or excited during role-play—building early emotional awareness. • **Seeks comfort from familiar adults when needed -** Children rely on trusted adults to support them during busy castle play, helping them feel secure enough to re-join activities and explore confidently. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Becomes more flexible and cooperative -** Children work together to build castles, organise roles (knight, queen, guard, dragon) and negotiate shared storylines, becoming more adaptable and cooperative during group play. • **Returns to the secure base of a familiar adult to recharge when needed -** When castle play becomes busy or dramatic, children confidently return to a familiar adult for reassurance before re-joining the activity, showing secure emotional attachment. • **Shows confidence in speaking to others about their own needs and wants in a group situation -** Children express their preferences clearly—choosing roles, requesting props or explaining how they want the castle story to unfold—building confidence in group communication.	worried or unsure during sensory exploration and respond with simple gestures, such as offering a shell or inviting them to join in. • **May recognise that some actions can hurt or harm others -** Children begin to understand that certain behaviours—throwing sea creatures, pushing near slippery areas—can harm others, and start to show early self-control. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Proactively seeks adult support when needed -** Children confidently approach adults for help when exploring new sea-themed resources (e.g., tricky shells, water tools) or when practising school routines such as lining up or organising belongings, showing secure attachment and growing independence. • **Articulates their wants and needs -** During under-the-sea play, children express what they want to explore—choosing sea creatures, selecting water tools or asking for a turn with the "submarine." In transition-to-school activities, they clearly communicate needs such as wanting help with zips, choosing a book or asking where to put their bag. • **Has a clear idea about what they want to do in their play -** Children plan purposeful play, such as deciding to build a coral reef, rescue sea creatures or create an ocean map. In school-readiness contexts, they show intention by

	safely. They begin to understand how words and actions can affect others, supporting emotional resilience. • **Expresses a wide range of feelings in their interactions with others -** Traditional Tales are rich with emotional cues. Children act out excitement, fear, surprise or kindness through character play, using expressive language and gestures to communicate feelings more clearly with peers. • **May exhibit increased fearfulness of things -** Stories with gentle tension (e.g., the wolf knocking on the door, the troll under the bridge) allow children to explore fear in a safe, supported way. They learn to manage big feelings, talk about what scares them and understand that stories have predictable, safe endings.	understand consequences in play, such as what happens if they drive too fast, block the road, or take all the vehicles. They learn that their actions affect the flow of shared journeys and the feelings of others.	They begin to express needs clearly—asking for help to reach materials, build enclosures or solve small conflicts in play. • **Understands that expectations vary depending on different events, social situations and changes in routine -** Through wild-animal play, children learn that different situations have different rules: being calm when observing animals, being gentle with small-world creatures, or following group expectations during a "safari". They begin to adapt behaviour as routines or play contexts change.	sprout—and begin to understand how others feel during shared projects. • **Talks about their own and others feelings and behaviour and its consequences -** Growing and measuring activities naturally prompt conversations about behaviour: "We forgot to water it, so it didn't grow," helping children link actions to outcomes and talk about feelings with increasing clarity.	• **Can describe what they can do well and what they are getting better at -** Castle-themed tasks such as building towers, designing shields or acting out stories help children reflect on their achievements ("I can build it taller now") and recognise their growing skills. • **Attempts to repair a relationship or situation -** When disagreements arise over roles or resources, children begin to offer solutions—sharing swords, swapping characters or rebuilding knocked-down towers—showing early conflict-resolution skills. • **Is more able to manage their feelings and tolerate situations where their wishes cannot be met -** Castle play provides natural moments where children practise emotional regulation, such as waiting for a turn with a popular costume or accepting when someone else becomes the knight they wanted to be.	choosing activities independently and following through with their ideas. • **Shows confidence in choosing resources and perseverance in carrying out a chosen activity -** Children select appropriate materials—nets, shells, water tools—to complete sea-themed tasks and keep going even when challenges arise (e.g., building a stable rock pool). During transition activities, they confidently choose classroom resources and persevere with tasks such as name writing or sorting. • **Seeks support and practical help in new or challenging situations -** Children ask for help when trying unfamiliar under-the-sea activities, such as using pipettes, pouring water or exploring new textures. In transition-to-school routines, they seek guidance when navigating new expectations like lining up, tidying or managing personal items. • **Is aware of behaviour expectations -** Children understand expectations during group ocean exploration—taking turns with water trays, using tools safely and respecting sea-themed resources. In school-readiness sessions, they show awareness of listening rules, tidy-up routines and shared classroom expectations. • **Seeks ways to manage conflict -** When disagreements arise over sea creatures or water tools, children begin to offer

						solutions such as sharing, swapping or taking turns. In transition-to-school contexts, they use simple strategies to resolve conflicts over classroom roles, resources or space.
Communication and Language **• Listening and Attention** **• Understanding** **• Speaking** Communication and Language is embedded throughout the half-termly topic, providing children with rich opportunities to develop listening, attention and speaking skills within meaningful, engaging contexts. Topic-related stories, songs, vocabulary and real-life experiences encourage children to talk about what they see, think and feel, helping them build confidence in expressing ideas. High-quality interactions model new language and support children in extending sentences, asking questions and engaging in conversations with adults and peers. Through role-play, small-group discussions and hands-on exploration linked to the theme, children learn to use language for a range of purposes—describing, predicting, recalling and explaining. This ensures Communication and Language remains central to learning and underpins progress across all areas of the EYFS.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Listens to and enjoys rhymes and stories -** Traditional Tales are repetitive and predictable, helping children tune in, anticipate what comes next and enjoy listening to short, familiar stories such as *Goldilocks* or *The Three Little Pigs*. **• Tries to join in with actions or vocalisations -** Repeated phrases ("Who's been sitting in my chair?") and simple actions (knocking on the door, stirring porridge) encourage children to copy sounds, gestures and movements as they join in with story retelling. **• Understands different situations – able to follow routine events and activities -** Traditional Tales follow clear sequences (first, next, then) which help children understand routines and simple story structures, supporting their ability to follow events in order. **• Copies familiar expressions -** Characters in Traditional Tales use strong facial expressions. Children enjoy copying the wolf's "huff and puff" face or Baby Bear's sad face, helping them practise early expression and imitation. **• Uses different types of everyday words -** Story play introduces simple	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions -** Travel-themed songs and rhymes (e.g., "The Wheels on the Bus") encourage children to join in with actions such as turning wheels, opening doors or bouncing along, supporting early listening and participation. **• Selects familiar objects by name -** Children choose named vehicles such as "car", "bus", "train" or "boat" during play, showing understanding of familiar transport vocabulary. **• Will find objects when asked -** Adults prompt children to fetch items like "the red car", "the big bus" or "the train track", helping them follow simple instructions within a meaningful travel context. **• Beginning to put two words together -** Transport play naturally encourages early two-word combinations such as "big bus", "fast car", "my train", or "go now", supporting developing expressive language. **• Beginning to ask simple questions -** Children begin to ask early questions such as "Where bus?", "Who driving?", or "Go now?", showing curiosity and developing communication during travel-themed play.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Pays attention to own choice of activity. May move quickly from activity to activity -** Children choose their own wild-animal play, such as exploring a jungle small-world or moving like animals. They may switch quickly between animals or activities, showing developing attention and curiosity within the theme. **• Understands simple sentences -** Wild-animal play provides meaningful opportunities to follow simple instructions such as "Feed the lion", "Put the monkey in the tree", or "Find the big elephant", supporting early comprehension. **• Beginning to talk about people and things that are not present -** Children begin to talk about animals they have seen in books, at the zoo or on TV, even when they are not in front of them. They recall past experiences ("We saw a giraffe") and talk about familiar people linked to those outings. **• Uses gestures, sometimes with limited talk -** Children use gestures such as pointing, roaring, flapping or stomping to communicate ideas about wild animals. These actions support early communication when	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories -** Children enjoy listening to adults emphasise sounds in growing stories—watering noises, digging sounds, rustling leaves—helping them tune into expressive storytelling linked to plants and nature. **• Recognises and responds to familiar sounds -** Children respond to sounds associated with growing activities, such as tapping pots, pouring water or shaking seeds, strengthening auditory discrimination through meaningful routines. **• Identifies action words by following simple instructions -** Growing tasks such as "pour", "dig", "pat", "water" or "carry" help children understand and follow action words while engaging in purposeful, hands-on activity. **• Uses language to share feelings, experiences and thoughts -** Children talk about how their plant looks, how the soil feels or what they notice changing, using simple language to express thoughts and early observations. **• Holds a conversation, jumping from topic to topic -** Growing and measuring experiences spark	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Shows interest in playing with sounds, songs and rhymes -** Children enjoy joining in with simple castle-themed songs and rhymes, experimenting with sounds such as "clang" for shields or "stomp" for knights, strengthening early phonological awareness. **• Beginning to understand more complex sentences -** Castle play provides meaningful opportunities to follow slightly longer instructions, such as "Put the knight on the tower" or "Find the dragon behind the gate," supporting early comprehension. **• Understands who, what, where in simple questions -** Children respond to simple questions during castle exploration—*Who* is in the castle? *What* is the knight holding? *Where* is the dragon hiding?—building early questioning and understanding. **• Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them in communicated -** The topic introduces rich vocabulary such as *castle*, *tower*, *shield*, *king*, *queen*, *dragon*, *bridge*, helping children quickly learn and use new words in meaningful play. **• Uses a variety of questions -** Children begin to ask their own questions during castle play—	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Single channelled attention; can shift to a different task if attention full obtained -** Children focus on one under-the-sea activity at a time, such as exploring shells or watching water pour, and can shift to another task—like feeding sea creatures or building a rock pool—once their attention is fully engaged. **• Developing understanding of simple concepts -** Sea-themed play helps children understand early concepts such as *big/small* fish, *wet/dry* textures, *float/sink* objects and *fast/slow* sea creatures, strengthening early thinking. **• Uses longer sentences -** Children begin to use longer sentences to describe what they see and do, such as "The fish is swimming fast," "I'm pouring water in," or "The crab is hiding under the rock." **• Beginning to use word endings -** Through repeated ocean vocabulary, children start to use early word endings naturally, saying phrases like "fishes," "swimming," "bubbles popping," or "crabs hiding," supporting emerging grammar. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** **• Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others**

	vocabulary such as *big*, *small*, *hot*, *cold*, *house*, *bed*, *chair*, which children begin to use independently during small-world and role-play activities. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Listens to others in one to one or small groups when conversation interests them -** Traditional Tales spark children's interest, helping them listen closely to adults and peers as they discuss characters, settings and what might happen next. • **Listens to familiar stories with increasing attention and recall -** Repetition in stories such as *The Three Little Pigs* or *Goldilocks* supports children to remember key events, join in with repeated refrains and recall details with growing accuracy. • **Understands use of objects -** Story props (bowls, chairs, houses, bridges) help children understand how objects are used within the tale, supporting imaginative play and early problem-solving. • **Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts -** When retelling stories, children begin to use connecting words such as *because*, *and then*, *so*, helping them explain characters' actions and link ideas together. • **Able to use language in recalling past experiences -** Children relate story events to their own experiences ("I felt scared like the Billy Goat"), strengthening their ability to	**3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories -** Travel-themed stories and songs (e.g., *The Train Ride*, *The Wheels on the Bus*) encourage children to join in with repeated lines and anticipate familiar moments such as "doors open" or "all aboard", strengthening memory and participation. • **Focusing attention – can still listen or do but can change their own focus of attention -** During travel role-play, children listen to instructions like "stop", "go", "slow down", or "wait at the station", and shift attention between driving, watching signals and responding to peers. • **Shows understanding of prepositions -** Transport play provides rich opportunities to use and understand positional language such as "under the bridge", "behind the bus", "on the track", "next to the station", or "in front of the car". • **Questions why things happen and gives explanations -** Children ask and answer questions such as "Why did the car crash?", "Why is the train late?", or "How does the plane fly?", showing early reasoning and curiosity about how things work. • **Beginning to use a range of tenses -** Travel experiences naturally prompt children to use past, present and future tenses: "We went fast", "I am	spoken language is still developing. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Is able to follow directions -** Children follow simple instructions during wild-animal play such as "Put the zebra in the long grass" or "Make a path for the elephants", supporting listening and understanding in meaningful contexts. • **Responds to instructions with more elements -** Multi-step directions like "Find the lion, put it in the cave and then feed it" help children process and respond to more complex language during play. • **Beginning to understand why and how questions -** Wild-animal exploration encourages children to think and talk about reasons: "Why does the giraffe have a long neck?", "How do monkeys climb trees?", supporting early reasoning and deeper understanding. • **Uses intonations, rhythm and phrasing to make the meaning clear to others -** Children experiment with expressive voices—roaring loudly, whispering like a sneaky tiger, or using excited tones when animals run—helping them communicate meaning through speech patterns. • **Talks more extensively about things that are on importance to them -** Many children have strong interests in wild animals. They talk at length about favourites, zoo visits, animal facts or habitats, building confidence in extended conversation.	spontaneous conversations—children may jump between talking about their plant, the weather, the tools or other interests—showing developing conversational confidence. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Shows variability in listening behaviour; may move around and fiddle but still be listening -** During growing activities, children may move around, explore tools or fiddle with soil while still listening to instructions such as *"Can you find the tallest plant?"* or *"Let's measure how much it's grown."* The topic supports sustained attention through high-interest, hands-on experiences. • **Understands a range of complex sentence structures -** Growing and measuring naturally introduce more complex language: *"If we water it every day, it will grow taller,"* or *"When the leaves change colour, it means the plant needs more light."* Children begin to follow and respond to these multi-clause explanations. • **Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming new words -** The topic provides rich opportunities to learn and group new words such as *stem*, *root*, *leaf*, *tall*, *short*, *long*, *measure*, *growth*, *soil*, *watering can*. Children begin to use this vocabulary confidently when describing changes and comparing sizes.	"Where's the dragon?", "What's in the tower?", "Who's the king?"—showing growing curiosity and early conversational skills. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **May indicate two-channelled attention -** Children listen to castle stories or instructions while continuing their play, such as building towers or moving characters, showing growing ability to divide attention between narrative and action. • **Beginning to understand humour** - Castle play provides natural moments of humour—silly dragons, clumsy knights, playful royal banquets—helping children recognise jokes, funny situations and playful language. • **Able to follow a story without pictures or props -** Children enjoy listening to castle tales told orally, imagining knights, quests and dragons without visual prompts, strengthening auditory comprehension and imaginative thinking. • **Uses language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences in play situations -** Children use rich language to act out castle roles—giving orders as kings, rescuing as knights or roaring as dragons—recreating scenes and experiences with increasing detail. • **Links statement and sticks to a main theme or intention -** During castle storytelling, children stay focused on the main idea—defending the castle, finding	**-** During under-the-sea play, children listen to friends' ideas about where to place sea creatures or how to build a coral reef, responding with their own suggestions. In transition-to-school activities, they listen to peers' ideas during group discussions and respond appropriately, showing growing conversational awareness. • **Understands questions such as who, why, when, where and how -** Sea-themed exploration encourages children to answer questions like *"Who lives in the rock pool?"*, *"Why is the water moving?"* or *"Where is the crab hiding?"*. In school-readiness contexts, they respond to questions about routines—*"Where do we put our book bags?"* or *"How do we line up?"*—showing deeper comprehension. • **Uses talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events -** Children use language to organise their thoughts while exploring ocean environments, such as describing the steps in building a sandcastle or explaining how they rescued a sea creature. In transition-to-school play, they sequence events like *"First we hang our coat, then we sit on the carpet"*, clarifying their thinking with increasing confidence. • **Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play -** Under-the-sea role play inspires children to create

	talk about things that have already happened. • **Can retell a simple past event in correct order -** Traditional Tales follow clear sequences, supporting children to retell events in order (first the pigs built their houses, then the wolf came, then he blew them down). • **Uses talk to explain what is happening and anticipate what happens next -** Predictable story patterns encourage children to explain what they see in pictures and guess what might happen next, building early inference and narrative skills.	driving", "We will go to the airport", helping them experiment with time language. • **Continues to make some errors in language and will absorb and use language they head around them -** Through hearing adults model travel vocabulary ("destination", "passenger", "ticket", "engine"), children imitate new words and phrases, gradually refining their grammar through repeated exposure.	• **Builds up vocabulary that reflects their experiences -** Through stories, small-world play and role-play, children learn and use rich vocabulary such as *habitat*, *jungle*, *predator*, *stripe*, *claw*, *camouflage*, reflecting their growing knowledge of wild animals. • **Uses talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play -** Children use imaginative language as they transform blocks into caves, leaves into food or sticks into animal tools, narrating their pretend play and strengthening symbolic thinking.		treasure, rescuing a character—linking statements logically and maintaining a clear storyline.	imaginative narratives—rescuing trapped fish, exploring deep-sea caves or going on a submarine adventure. In school-themed play, they introduce storylines about starting the school day, being the teacher or helping friends settle in, showing growing ability to sustain a narrative.
Physical Development • **Moving and Handling** • **Health and Self-care** Physical Development is embedded throughout the half-termly topic, giving children meaningful opportunities to strengthen both gross- and fine-motor skills within purposeful, engaging contexts. Children develop coordination, control and confidence through movement, role-play and outdoor learning linked to the theme. Fine-motor skills are supported through activities such as mark-making, construction, tool use and handling small objects related to the topic. Children also learn about keeping healthy, managing their own self-care and understanding how their bodies work as they explore the theme. By linking Physical Development to familiar and motivating experiences,	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Develops security in walking upright -** Traditional Tales often involve moving around story settings (e.g., exploring the Three Bears' cottage or walking across the "bridge" in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*), giving children purposeful opportunities to walk confidently and safely. • **Walks upstairs facing forwards holding rail or hard of adult -** Story play may include climbing small steps or platforms to reach "castles", "beds" or "houses", supporting safe climbing with adult guidance while linking movement to story events. • **Changed position from standing to squatting -** Children squat to look closely at props, characters or small-world items (e.g., peeking into the pigs' houses or looking at Baby Bear's bowl), strengthening	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Participates in finger and action rhymes, songs and games -** Travel-themed rhymes such as *The Wheels on the Bus* encourage children to join in with actions like turning wheels, opening doors or bouncing along, supporting rhythm, coordination and early listening. • **Hands start to operate independently during a task that uses both -** Pushing cars while holding a figure, placing passengers into buses, or connecting train track pieces helps children develop bilateral coordination and early problem-solving. • **Shows interest, dances and sings to music rhymes and song -** Music linked to travel (fast/slow train sounds, engine noises, marching rhythms) encourages children to move, dance and sing,	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Can walk considerable distance with purpose -** Children move with intention during wild-animal play, walking long distances as they "go on safari", search for animals in the outdoor area or follow animal footprints, strengthening stamina and purposeful movement. • **Looks closely at small items and creatures -** Exploring small-world animals, insects in the garden or animal footprints encourages children to observe details such as patterns, colours and textures, supporting early scientific curiosity. • **Makes connections between their movement and the marks they make -** Children make marks linked to animal movements—scratching like a bear, zig-zagging like a snake or stomping like an elephant—helping them understand	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Sits up from lying down, stands up from sitting and squats with steadiness -** Children practise these movements as they bend to look closely at plants, squat to fill pots with soil and stand to reach higher growing areas, building core strength and balance through purposeful activity. • **Sits comfortably on a chair -** Sitting at a table to plant seeds, pour soil or observe changes helps children develop sustained sitting skills during calm, focused growing tasks. • **Runs safely on whole foot -** Outdoor growing spaces encourage safe running as children move between planting areas, collect water or explore natural materials, strengthening coordination and whole-foot running. • **Moves in response to music or instruments -** Songs about growing-rain	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Begins to walk, run and climb on different surfaces -** Exploring castle-themed obstacle courses, stepping over "moats," climbing small "castle steps," and running across pretend courtyards helps children practise moving confidently on varied surfaces. • **Begins to choose different ways of moving -** Children experiment with different movements inspired by castle characters—marching like knights, tip-toeing like sneaky dragons, or gliding like royalty—building body awareness and control. • **Kicks a stationary ball with either foot -** Kicking "cannonballs" or soft balls towards castle targets supports balance, coordination and early ball-skills within a playful medieval theme. • **Throws and catches a large ball -** Throwing soft	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Uses wheeled toys with increasing skill -** Children move wheeled toys through "underwater pathways," steering them around shells, seaweed and rock-pool obstacles, strengthening coordination and purposeful movement. • **Beginning to show preference for dominant hand -** Sea-themed mark-making—drawing fish, waves or bubbles—encourages children to naturally favour one hand as they explore crayons, brushes or water tools. • **Turns pages in a book -** Sharing simple under-the-sea books helps children practise turning pages carefully while exploring pictures of sea creatures, coral reefs and ocean habitats. • **Increasing control in holding, using and manipulating tools and objects -** Children develop

children build independence, resilience and a secure foundation for future learning.	balance and coordination through story exploration. • **Sleeps 12-14 hours a day -** Traditional Tales include bedtime themes (e.g., Goldilocks trying the beds), offering gentle opportunities to talk about rest, comfort and routines that help children feel secure. • **Highly active in short bursts -** Stories with movement (running from the wolf, pretending to stir porridge, knocking on doors) allow children to engage in short, energetic bursts of play that match their natural activity patterns. • **Enjoys hugs and cuddles -** Many tales include comforting moments (e.g., Baby Bear being soothed), helping children explore closeness, reassurance and gentle affection through role-play with adults and peers. • **Generally has up to 16 teeth -** Story moments involving food (porridge, apples, gingerbread) provide simple opportunities to talk about eating, teeth and healthy habits in a playful, familiar context. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Climbs stairs, steps and moved across climbing equipment -** Children act out story journeys such as climbing "up to the cottage" in *Goldilocks* or crossing the "bridge" in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, giving purposeful opportunities to climb safely and confidently. • **Maintains balance using hands and body -** Traditional Tales role-play often involves balancing on	exploring tempo and expressive movement. • **Intentionally makes sounds with objects -** Children enjoy creating engine noises, tapping wheels, shaking "train bells" or banging blocks like roadworks, experimenting with sound in meaningful travel contexts. • **Develops own likes and dislikes in food and drink -** Role-play cafés, train-station snack shops or aeroplane trolleys allow children to explore preferences ("I like juice", "No milk"), supporting independence and early decision-making. • **Shows interest in indoor and outdoor clothing -** Dressing for journeys—putting on coats for "going to the station", wearing hats for "the airport", or choosing wellies for "the ferry"—helps children understand clothing for different types of travel and weather. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Runs with spatial awareness -** Children navigate "roads", "runways" and "train platforms" in outdoor play, adjusting speed and direction as they move around vehicles, cones and other children, strengthening safe spatial awareness. • **Negotiates space successfully -** Travel role-play encourages children to steer bikes, scooters or pushchairs along marked routes, avoiding obstacles and following simple traffic rules	how actions create different lines and patterns. • **Uses gesture and body language to convey needs -** Children use gestures such as pointing to animals they want, miming animal movements or signalling for help during play, supporting early communication when words are still developing. • **Clearly communicates wet or soiled nappy or pants -** During wild-animal routines (feeding, washing, caring for animals), children begin to recognise and communicate their own care needs, supported by predictable, nurturing play. • **Helps with dressing/undressing and care routines -** Children practise dressing skills through role-play such as putting on "explorer hats", wellies for outdoor animal hunts or helping dress soft-toy animals, building independence in care routines. • **Feeds self with increasing need to be in control -** Snack times linked to animal themes (picnic for the animals, jungle snack stop) encourage children to feed themselves confidently, strengthening coordination and independence. • **Holds cup with both hands -** Children practise holding cups securely during themed snack times, such as "watering hole drinks", supporting grip strength and early self-care skills. **3 – 4 Year Olds –**	falling, sun shining, seeds sprouting—invite children to move expressively, linking rhythm and movement to natural cycles. • **Jumps up in the air with both feet leaving the floor -** Children practise jumping during playful measuring activities, such as comparing how high they can jump "like a growing plant reaching the sun." • **Very energetic in short bursts and needs time for rest and calm -** Growing and measuring routines balance energetic outdoor exploration with calming sensory experiences like watering, touching soil or watching plants, supporting regulation. • **Needs to sleep for 10-13 hours a day -** Discussions about what plants need to grow—sunlight, water, rest—help children begin to understand their own need for sleep and restoration. • **Feeds self competently -** Snack times linked to growing (fruit tasting, vegetable exploration) encourage children to feed themselves confidently and explore healthy foods. • **Can hold a cup with two hands -** Children practise holding cups or small watering cans with two hands when watering plants, strengthening grip, stability and early self-care skills. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Chooses to move in a range of ways, moving freely and with confidence -** Children move confidently around growing areas,	"boulders" into castle baskets or catching balls during knight-training games strengthens hand-eye coordination and gross motor confidence. • **Climbs up and down stairs -** Moving up and down small steps or platforms to reach castle towers or lookout points supports safe climbing and early spatial awareness. • **Develops some independence with self-care -** Dressing up in simple knight or royal costumes encourages children to practise putting on cloaks, fastening belts or slipping on boots, building independence in dressing routines. • **Develops increasing understanding of and control of the bowel and bladder urges -** Engaging in castle play routines helps children recognise when they need a toilet break and begin to pause their play appropriately, strengthening early self-regulation. • **Able to help with putting on and taking off simple clothing items -** Putting on tabards, capes or soft helmets during castle role play gives children meaningful opportunities to practise dressing and undressing skills. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Travels with confidence and skill around, under and over -** Children move confidently through castle-themed obstacle courses, travelling under drawbridges, over "castle walls," and around towers,	control by using scoops, pipettes, nets and small containers during water play, manipulating tools to move water, shells or toy fish. • **Holds mark making tools with thumb and all fingers -** Drawing waves, fish or underwater shapes on paper, sand or playdough supports a developing whole-hand grip and early mark-making confidence. • **Begins to recognise danger -** Children start to understand simple safety messages, such as walking carefully near water trays, keeping tools low, and noticing when the floor is slippery. • **Can increasingly express their thoughts and emotions through words and facial expressions -** Under-the-sea play encourages children to express excitement, curiosity or uncertainty—talking about what they see, sharing feelings about water play, or showing delight when discovering new sea creatures. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Shows a preference for a dominant hand -** Children naturally favour one hand when drawing sea creatures, tracing waves or completing school-readiness mark-making tasks such as name writing or simple classroom labels. • **Begins to use anticlockwise movements -** Under-the-sea mark-making encourages children to practise anticlockwise movements

	stepping stones, logs or small-world bridges, helping children use their bodies to stay steady while moving like different characters. • **Walks down steps or slopes whilst carrying a small object -** Carrying props such as bowls, baskets or story items supports coordination as children move down steps or slopes, just like characters travelling through their tale. • **Can tell adults when hungry, full up or tired -** Stories such as *Goldilocks* provide natural opportunities to talk about hunger, comfort and rest, helping children recognise and communicate their own needs during play. • **Observes and can describe in words or actions the effects of physical activity on their bodies -** After acting out energetic story scenes (running from the wolf, climbing like the goats), children notice changes in their breathing or heartbeat and begin to describe how their bodies feel. • **Can name and identify body parts -** Using puppets and characters, children point to and name features ("the wolf's teeth", "the bear's paws"), strengthening vocabulary and body awareness through story talk. • **Takes practical action to reduce risk -** Story settings encourage children to think about safety, such as crossing the "bridge" carefully or carrying props sensibly, helping them make	such as stop/go or one-way paths. • **Can balance on one foot or in a squat momentarily -** Pretending to be passengers boarding a bus, balancing on a "ferry plank", or crouching to fix a "broken engine" helps children practise controlled balancing and squatting. • **Can grasp and release with two hands to throw and catch a large ball -** Travel-themed games such as "airport luggage toss", "loading parcels onto the van", or catching a "hot-air balloon" ball support coordinated two-handed throwing and catching. • **Willing to try a range of different textures and tastes** - Sensory travel experiences—sand for the beach, water for boats, gravel for roads, pretend snacks from a "train café"—encourage children to explore new textures and tastes linked to journeys. • **Observes and controls breath -** Children practise breath control by blowing "wind" to move toy boats, blowing whistles for trains, or calming their breathing after energetic "airport" or "station" play. • **Can mirror the playful actions or movements of another adult or child -** Copying travel-themed movements—flying like aeroplanes, chugging like trains, bouncing like buses—supports imitation, coordination and shared imaginative play.	• **Creates lines and circles pivoting from the shoulder and elbow -** Children draw animal footprints, swirls for snakes or circles for animal faces, using large arm movements that strengthen shoulder and elbow control. • **Manipulating a range of tools and equipment in one hand including paint brushes, scissors etc -** Wild-animal activities such as cutting out animal shapes, painting stripes or spots, or using tweezers to "feed" small animals help refine one-handed tool use and fine-motor precision. • **Working towards a consistent, daily pattern in relation to eating, toileting and sleeping -** Through caring-for-animals role play (feeding times, rest times, cleaning habitats), children begin to understand predictable routines and relate them to their own daily patterns. • **Gains more bowel and bladder control -** Calm, structured wild-animal play—such as setting up habitats or engaging in small-world scenes—supports children to recognise bodily cues and take themselves to the toilet with increasing independence. • **Dresses with help -** Dressing for outdoor "safari adventures" or putting on role-play items (animal tails, explorer hats, vests) gives children meaningful opportunities to practise dressing skills with adult support.	choosing to stretch up high to compare plant heights, crouch low to observe roots or walk carefully along garden paths, strengthening purposeful movement. • **Experiments with different ways of moving -** Growing and measuring activities encourage children to try new movements—carrying watering cans, tiptoeing to reach tall plants, or moving slowly and carefully around delicate seedlings. • **Jumps off an object and lands appropriately -** Outdoor growing spaces provide natural opportunities for safe jumping, such as stepping off low logs or platforms to "measure how high they can jump compared to the plants," supporting controlled landings. • **Negotiates space successfully when playing chasing games -** When exploring gardens or outdoor growing areas, children navigate around pots, tools and planting beds, learning to move safely and negotiate space during playful movement. • **Eats a healthy range of foodstuff -** Growing fruits, vegetables or herbs encourages children to try new foods and understand that healthy eating helps their bodies grow, linking self-care to real experiences. • **Describes a range of different food textures and tastes when cooking -** Cooking with home-grown produce—tasting crunchy carrots, soft berries or	strengthening balance, coordination and spatial awareness. • **Shows increasing control over an object in pushing, patting, throwing and kicking -** Knight-training games—patting soft "shields," pushing boulders, throwing foam "arrows," or kicking balls at castle targets—support growing control and purposeful movement. • **Uses simple tools to effect change on materials -** Children use tools such as child-safe hammers, scoops or brushes to build castles, dig moats or decorate shields, learning how tools change materials and developing early problem-solving. • **Handles tools and objects with increasing control -** Manipulating small world knights, placing bricks carefully, fastening costume pieces or arranging props helps children refine precision and hand strength. • **Can initiate and describe playful actions or movements -** Children invent castle-themed movements—marching like knights, creeping like castle guards, swooping like dragons—and describe their actions confidently during imaginative play. • **Has established a consistent, daily pattern in relation to eating, toilet and sleeping -** Predictable routines within castle play (snack in the "banquet hall," toilet breaks before "quests") reinforce children's growing	when drawing spirals for shells, swirling water patterns or forming early letter shapes during transition-to-school writing activities. • **Begins to form recognisable letters -** Children attempt to write the first letter of their name on sea-themed "diver badges," underwater maps or school-readiness name cards, beginning to form letters with increasing accuracy. • **Uses a pencil and holds it effectively -** Drawing fish, coral reefs or underwater landscapes supports effective pencil grip, while transition-to-school tasks such as tracing classroom symbols or writing simple words strengthen control. • **Shows understanding of the need for safety -** Children demonstrate awareness of safety when using water tools, walking carefully around wet areas, or handling mark-making tools. In school-readiness routines, they show understanding of safe movement around shared spaces and equipment. • **Shows understanding of how to transport and store equipment -** Children learn to carry and tidy away sea-themed resources—nets, shells, water containers—and begin to store classroom materials correctly during transition-to-school activities such as tidying pencils, books and name cards. • **Practices some safety measures without direct**

	safe choices during imaginative play. • **Can wash and dry hands and understands why this is important -** Tales involving food (porridge, gingerbread, apples) provide simple opportunities to talk about hygiene and handwashing before role-play cooking or tasting activities.			fragrant herbs—helps children describe textures and tastes while building sensory vocabulary. • **Describes physical changes to the body that occurs -** Children notice how their bodies feel during growing activities—warm from the sun, tired after digging, strong after carrying soil—and begin to describe these physical changes with increasing awareness.	independence and consistency in self-care habits.	**supervision -** Children independently follow safety rules, such as keeping water tools low, wiping spills, or using scissors correctly during sea-themed craft. In school-readiness contexts, they manage routines like lining up, tidying and moving around the classroom safely.
Literacy • **Reading** • **Writing** Literacy is woven purposefully throughout the half-termly topic, enabling children to develop early reading, writing and communication skills within meaningful and engaging contexts. High-quality stories, rhymes and non-fiction texts linked to the topic build vocabulary, deepen understanding and support children's ability to recall and retell events. Children explore early phonological skills—such as rhythm, rhyme, initial sounds and oral blending—through topic-related songs, poems and playful sound activities. Mark-making opportunities are embedded across provision, encouraging children to create labels, lists, maps and simple representations connected to the theme. By linking Literacy to real experiences and familiar concepts, children develop confidence, enjoyment and a strong foundation for early reading and writing.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Is interested in and anticipates books and rhymes -** Traditional Tales are repetitive and predictable, helping children look forward to favourite parts of the story. They begin to anticipate key moments such as "Who's been sitting in my chair?" or "I'll huff and I'll puff…", showing growing excitement and engagement. • **Begins to understand the cause and effect of their actions in mark making -** Children make early marks linked to stories, such as drawing lines for the pigs' houses, circles for bowls, or zig-zags for the wolf's path. They begin to notice that their marks can represent story ideas, helping them understand that their actions create visible effects. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Listens to and joins in with stories and poems -** Traditional Tales encourage children to join in with repeated phrases, actions and character voices, helping them become active	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Begins to join in with actions and sounds in familiar songs and books -** — Travel-themed songs such as *The Wheels on the Bus* encourage children to copy actions like turning wheels, opening doors or bouncing along. They also enjoy making simple vehicle sounds (beep-beep, choo-choo), supporting early participation and listening. • **Knows that the marks they make are of value -** Children make purposeful marks as they draw roads, tracks, wheels or simple maps. They enjoy "writing tickets", making tyre marks in paint or sand, and creating lines for vehicles to follow, helping them understand that their marks represent real ideas. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Recognises familiar words and signs such as own name, advertising logos and screen icons -** Transport environments are rich in signs: stop signs, bus numbers, road symbols, airport icons. Children begin to recognise familiar logos	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Has some favourite stories, rhymes, songs and poems -** Children enjoy returning to familiar wild-animal books and songs such as *Dear Zoo* or *Walking Through the Jungle*. Repetition helps them anticipate key moments, join in with animal sounds and build early story awareness. • **Enjoys the sensory experience of making marks -** Wild-animal themed mark making—paw-print painting, sandy "desert" trays, muddy tracks or finger-drawing stripes and spots—encourages children to explore textures and movements while expressing early ideas through marks. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Handles books and touch screen technology carefully and the correct way up with growing competence -** Children explore wild-animal storybooks, fact books and simple animal apps, learning to hold them correctly, turn pages carefully and navigate digital	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Repeats and uses actions, words or phrases from familiar stores -** Children repeat key phrases from growing stories such as *"The seed is growing!"* or copy actions like patting soil or pretending to water plants, showing early story recall linked to real experiences. • **Fills in the missing word or phrase in a known rhyme or story -** Growing-themed rhymes (rain, sun, seeds, plants) encourage children to join in and complete familiar lines, strengthening memory, rhythm and early phonological awareness. • **Distinguishes between the different marks they make -** Children explore mark making inspired by growing—drawing tall and short lines for plant height, dots for seeds, or wavy lines for water—beginning to notice differences in the marks they create and what they represent. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Enjoys an increasing range of print and digital books -** Children explore	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Begins to recognise familiar logos -** Children begin to notice and recognise simple castle-related symbols such as shields, flags, crowns or dragon emblems. They start to identify repeated shapes or marks on castle props, helping them understand that symbols carry meaning. • **Enjoys drawing and writing on paper, on screen and on different textures, such as in sand or playdough and through using touch-screen technology -** Castle play encourages children to make marks in varied ways: drawing towers in sand, pressing shapes into playdough to make "castle bricks," using crayons to design shields, or tapping on touch-screens to create simple castle pictures. These experiences strengthen early writing behaviours and help children explore how different textures and tools create different effects. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Is able to recall and discuss stories or**	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Enjoys rhythmic and musical activities with instruments, actions rhymes and songs -** Children explore ocean-themed music by shaking "sea shakers," tapping drums for "crashing waves," and joining in simple action rhymes about fish, crabs and sea creatures. These rhythmic experiences help them respond to beat, tempo and movement. • **Makes up stories, play scenarios, and drawings in response to experiences, such as outings -** Under-the-sea play inspires children to create simple stories, such as rescuing a fish, exploring a rock pool or finding treasure. They draw waves, bubbles and sea creatures, and use props to act out imaginative underwater adventures based on their sensory experiences. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Begins to link sounds to some frequently used digraphs, e.g. sh, th, ee -** Sea-themed vocabulary provides rich opportunities to notice digraphs, such as

	participants in shared storytelling. • **Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases -** Predictable lines such as "I'll huff and I'll puff…" or "Who's been sitting in my chair?" help children anticipate what comes next and join in with growing confidence. • **Begins to be aware of the way stories are structured -** Traditional Tales follow clear beginnings, middles and endings, helping children understand how stories are built and recognise simple narrative patterns. • **Talks about events and principal characters in stories and suggests how the story might end -** Children discuss characters' actions, feelings and choices, and begin to predict endings or offer their own ideas about what might happen next. • **Shows interest in illustrations and words in print and digital books and words in the environment -** Rich illustrations in Traditional Tales draw children's attention to details, helping them notice print, symbols and environmental text linked to the story world. • **Sometimes gives meaning to their drawings and paintings -** Children create drawings of characters, houses, bridges or forests and begin to explain what their marks represent, linking their artwork to the stories they know.	(e.g., fuel stations, bus symbols) and spot their own name on "tickets" or "passenger lists". • **Looks at and enjoys print and digital books independently -** Travel-themed books (*The Train Ride*, *Naughty Bus*, *Mr Gumpy's Outing*) encourage children to explore print independently, turning pages, looking closely at pictures and retelling parts of the journey. • **Knows that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom -** Children follow simple maps, timetables or "tickets", noticing that print gives information about where to go and what to do. They track text direction when sharing travel stories with adults. • **Knows information can be relayed through signs and symbols in various forms -** Transport play introduces meaningful symbols such as arrows, traffic lights, road markings and station signs. Children begin to understand that these symbols communicate instructions and information. • **Imitates adults' writing by making continuous lines of shapes and symbols -** Children enjoy "writing" bus tickets, road signs, delivery notes or maps using lines, circles and squiggles, imitating the writing they see in real-life travel contexts. • **Attempts to write their own name, or other names and words, using**	content with growing control. • **Begins to navigate apps and websites on digital media -** Using simple, child-friendly animal apps or digital zoo tours, children learn to tap, swipe and select images, building early digital literacy linked to their interest in animals. • **Begins to develop phonological and phonemic awareness -** Wild-animal vocabulary (lion, tiger, zebra, monkey) provides rich opportunities to listen to and play with sounds in words, supporting early phonological awareness. • **Shows awareness of rhyme and alliteration -** Children enjoy rhymes such as *Walking Through the Jungle* and alliterative phrases like "slithering snake" or "jumping jaguar", helping them tune into patterns in language. • **Recognises rhythm in spoken words, songs, poems and rhymes -** Travel-style animal chants and jungle songs help children hear and copy rhythmic patterns, strengthening early listening and sound discrimination. • **Claps or taps the syllables in words during sound play -** Children clap syllables in animal names—*li-on*, *ze-bra*, *el-e-phant*—building awareness of how words are broken into parts. • **Hears and says the initial sound in words -** Wild-animal vocabulary supports early phonics as children identify initial	stories and digital books about plants, gardens and growth cycles, widening their interest in different texts and linking reading to real-life growing experiences. • **Uses vocabulary and forms of speech that are increasingly influenced by their experiences of reading -** As children learn new words such as *stem*, *root*, *soil*, *tall*, *short*, *measure*, they begin to use this vocabulary in their play and explanations, mirroring language from growing-themed stories. • **Describes main story settings, events and principal characters -** Growing stories help children describe gardens, greenhouses, forests and outdoor spaces, as well as key events like planting, watering and measuring growth. • **Re-enacts and reinvents stories they have heard in their play -** Children act out planting scenes, pretend to be gardeners or recreate growth journeys from familiar books, showing deeper comprehension and imaginative retelling. • **Knows that information can be retrieved from books, computers and mobile digital devices -** Children use simple non-fiction books, digital stories or child-friendly apps to find out how plants grow, what they need and how to measure them, strengthening early research skills. • **Enjoys creating texts to communicate meaning for**	**information that has been read to them -** Children retell castle tales, remembering key characters such as knights, kings and dragons, and discussing events like quests or rescues, strengthening comprehension and recall. • **Begins to recognise some written names of familiar others -** Castle role play encourages children to spot familiar names on labels, "castle registers," or role-play badges, supporting early name recognition. • **Begins to develop phonological and phonemic awareness -** Castle-themed sound play—clanging shields, tapping swords, roaring dragons—helps children tune into rhythm, pattern and sound differences. • **Continues a rhyming string and identifies alliteration -** Children enjoy playful castle rhymes (*king–ring–sing*) and alliterative phrases (*brave bold knight*), strengthening awareness of sound patterns. • **Hears and says the initial sound in words -** Castle vocabulary provides rich opportunities to hear and say initial sounds: *k* for *king*, *c* for *castle*, *d* for *dragon*, *sh* for *shield*. • **Begins to segment the sounds in simple words and blend them -** Children practise segmenting and blending simple castle-themed words such as *s-word*, *c-rown*, *t-ower*, supporting early decoding skills. • **Starts to link sounds to letters, naming and**	*sh* in *shell*, *fish* and *shark*, *th* in *three fish*, and *ee* in *deep sea*. In transition-to-school activities, children spot these digraphs in classroom labels and early reading books. • **Begins to read some high frequency words -** Children read familiar words such as *the*, *to*, *go* and *we* in simple under-the-sea stories, picture books and classroom signs. During school-readiness routines, they recognise high-frequency words on name cards, labels and simple instructions. • **Engages with books and other reading materials at an increasingly deeper level, sometimes drawing on their phonic knowledge to decode words -** Sea-themed books encourage children to decode simple words using phonics, ask questions about sea creatures and predict what might happen next. In transition-to-school contexts, they show deeper engagement with early reading books, drawing on phonics to decode new vocabulary. • **Includes everyday literacy artefacts in play, such as labels, instructions, signs, envelopes, etc. -** Children use literacy artefacts in ocean play, such as labels for sea creatures, "diver instructions," treasure maps, signs for rock pools and envelopes for "sea mail." In school-readiness play, they include registers, name cards, classroom

	• **Ascribes meanings to signs, symbols and words that they see in different places -** Story maps, labels and simple signs (e.g., "bridge", "cottage", "forest") help children understand that symbols and words carry meaning within the tale. • **Includes mark making and early writing in their play -** Children use early writing to create story tickets, maps, porridge recipes or warning signs for the wolf, embedding meaningful mark-making within imaginative play.	**combinations of lines, circles and curves, or letter-type shapes -** Travel role-play provides purposeful reasons to write: signing tickets, labelling luggage, writing their name on a boarding pass or adding names to a passenger list.	sounds such as *l* for lion, *t* for tiger or *m* for monkey. • **Shows interest in letters on a keyboard, identifying the initial letter of their own name and other familiar words -** Children type the first letters of animal names or search for the initial letter of their own name while exploring simple animal-themed digital activities. • **Begins to make letter-type shapes to represent the initial sound of their name and other familiar words -** Children create early letter shapes when labelling animal drawings, making signs for habitats or writing the first letter of their favourite animal.	**an increasingly wide range of purposes, such as making greetings cards, tickets, lists etc -** Growing and measuring inspire purposeful writing: children make plant labels, growth charts, seed packets, lists of tools or simple instructions, showing early understanding of writing for different purposes. • **Gives meaning to the marks they make as they draw, write, paint and type using a keyboard or touch-screen technology -** Children draw tall and short plants, paint leaves and roots, or type simple words on digital devices, explaining what their marks represent and linking them to real growing observations.	**sounding the letters of the alphabet -** Castle labels, signs and props help children connect letters with sounds, such as recognising k for *king* or d for *dragon*. • **Begins to break the flow of speech into words, to hear and say the initial sound in words and may start to segment the sounds in words and blend them together -** During castle storytelling, children break speech into clear words, identify initial sounds and attempt simple segmenting and blending as they describe characters and actions.	labels and simple written instructions. • **Starts to develop phonic knowledge by linking sounds to letters, naming and sounding some of the letters of the alphabet, identifying letters and writing recognisable letters in sequence, such as in their own name -** Children link sounds to letters when labelling underwater drawings, identifying letters on sea-themed word cards or writing their name on diver badges. In transition-to-school tasks, they practise naming and sounding letters of the alphabet and writing recognisable letters in sequence. • **Uses their developing phonic knowledge to write things such as labels and captions -** Children write simple labels for fish, shells, coral reefs or underwater objects, using phonics to represent initial sounds and some medial sounds. In school-readiness activities, they write captions for drawings, label classroom items or attempt simple words using their growing phonic knowledge.
Mathematics Mathematics is meaningfully embedded throughout the half-termly topic, giving children regular opportunities to explore number, pattern, shape and measure within purposeful, real-world contexts. Through hands-on experiences, stories, role-play and continuous provision	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Responds to words like lots or more -** Traditional Tales provide natural opportunities to use quantity language, such as "lots of porridge", "more straw", or "more bricks", helping children respond to and understand early comparative words. • **Uses number words, like one or two and sometimes**	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Says some counting words -** Children begin to use early counting language as they count cars, wheels, passengers or steps on a "journey", supporting number awareness in a playful context. • **Enjoys filling and emptying containers -** Travel-themed resources such as buckets (boats),	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **May engage in counting-like behaviour, making sounds and pointing or saying some numbers in sequence -** Children point to animals as they "count" them, make rhythmic counting sounds while lining up lions or tap each animal as they say number-like words, building early	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Beginning to compare and recognise changes in numbers of things, using words like more, lots or 'same' -** Children compare quantities during growing activities, noticing when there are *more* seeds, *lots* of leaves or the *same* number of plants in two pots, building early number sense through real change.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Begins to say numbers in order, some of which are in the right order -** Children practise early counting as they say number sequences while placing knights on towers, counting castle steps or joining in simple castle-themed counting rhymes. • **Beginning to count on their fingers -** Castle play	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **In everyday situations, takes or gives two or three objects from a group -** Children practise early counting by giving or taking small numbers of sea creatures, shells or pebbles during ocean play, strengthening one-to-one correspondence. • **Moves their bodies and toys around objects and**

enhancements, children develop early number sense, practise counting with accuracy and begin to recognise quantities in everyday situations. They explore shape and spatial awareness through construction, small-world play and creative activities linked to the topic. Pattern-making, sorting and comparing objects are woven naturally into routines and play, helping children build secure foundations for mathematical thinking. By linking mathematical learning to familiar and engaging themes, children develop confidence, curiosity and enjoyment in using early maths to make sense of their world.	**responds accurately when asked to give one or two things -** Children count simple story props such as *one* bowl, *two* chairs, or *two* pigs, and may be asked to "give me one coin" or "find two shells" during story-linked play. • **Pushes objects through different shaped holes, and attempts to fit shapes into spaces on inset boards or puzzles -** Story-themed puzzles (houses, beds, characters) encourage children to match shapes and fit pieces into spaces, supporting early problem-solving linked to familiar tales. • **Becoming familiar with patterns in daily routines -** Traditional Tales follow predictable sequences (first, next, then), helping children recognise simple patterns in story events that mirror the routines they experience each day. • Shows an interest in size and weight - Tales such as *Goldilocks* introduce clear size contrasts (big, medium, small), while stories like *The Three Little Pigs* allow children to explore the weight of different materials (straw, sticks, bricks) through hands-on play. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Compares two small groups of up to five objects, saying when there are the same number of objects in each group -** Children compare bowls, chairs or beds in *Goldilocks*, or groups of bricks and sticks in *The Three Little*	boxes (luggage), or tubs (cargo) encourage children to fill and empty re • **Beginning to select a shape for a specific space -** Children match shapes when fitting cars into garages, placing trains on tracks, or slotting "tickets" into machines, helping them explore shape and spatial reasoning. • **Joins in with and predicts what comes next in a story or rhyme -** Travel stories and songs (*The Train Ride*, *Wheels on the Bus*) help children anticipate repeated lines and actions, supporting memory, listening and early narrative skills. • **Explores capacity by selecting, filling and emptying containers -** Children explore capacity as they load "cargo" into trucks, pour water into boats, or fill suitcases in role-play, learning about full/empty, heavy/light and more/less through hands-on travel play. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **May enjoy counting verbally as far as they can go -** Children count vehicles, wheels, passengers or steps on a "journey", often continuing as far as they are able, supporting fluency and enjoyment of number. • **Begin to recognise numerals 0 to 10 -** Transport environments are rich in numerals: bus numbers, platform signs, road speed limits and car registrations. Children begin to spot and name these numerals in meaningful contexts.	number awareness through playful exploration. • **Investigates fitting themselves inside and moving through spaces -** Wild-animal play encourages children to crawl through "tunnels", hide in "dens", squeeze into small spaces like burrows or move around obstacles like jungle vines, strengthening spatial awareness and body control. • **Enjoys using blocks to create their own simple structures and arrangements -** Children build enclosures, caves, nests or towers for animals using blocks, exploring balance, height and simple construction linked to their imaginative play. • **Beginning to arrange items in their own patterns -** Children create simple patterns with animals—lion, zebra, lion—or arrange stones, leaves or footprints in repeating sequences, developing early pattern recognition. • **Beginning to understand that things might happen now or at another time, in routines -** Caring-for-animals play (feeding time, sleep time, cleaning habitats) helps children understand simple routines and begin to anticipate what happens next, supporting early time awareness. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Points or touches each item, saying one number for each item, using the stable order of 1,2,3,4,5 -** Children count animals in	• **Beginning to notice numerals -** Numerals on plant labels, growth charts or watering schedules help children begin to recognise numbers in meaningful contexts linked to growing routines. • **Begins to remember their way around familiar environments -** Children remember where the plants are kept, where tools belong and how to navigate the growing area, strengthening spatial memory through repeated exploration. • **Chooses puzzle pieces and tries to fit them in -** Matching seed packets to pots, fitting tools into trays or completing simple plant-themed puzzles supports early problem-solving and spatial reasoning. • **Joins in and anticipates repeated sound and action patterns -** Growing routines—pour, pat, water; dig, drop, cover—help children anticipate repeated actions and rhythms, strengthening pattern awareness through hands-on sequences. • **Beginning to understand some talk about immediate past and future -** Children begin to understand time concepts when adults talk about what happened *yesterday* ("We planted the seeds") and what will happen *soon* ("Tomorrow we will measure how much they've grown"). **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Uses number names and symbols when comparing numbers, showing interest**	encourages children to use their fingers to count knights, dragons or bricks, supporting early one-to-one correspondence. • **Responds to some spatial and positional language -** Children follow simple positional instructions during castle play—placing a knight *on* the tower, hiding a dragon *under* the bridge, or moving a horse *behind* the gate—strengthening spatial awareness. • **Recognises that two objects have the same shape -** Children notice matching shapes in castle resources, such as round shields, square blocks or triangular flags, supporting early shape recognition. • **Is interested in what happens next using the pattern of everyday routines -** Predictable castle routines—opening the gate, marching to the tower, feeding the dragon—help children anticipate what comes next and understand simple sequences. • **Beginning to anticipate times of the day such as mealtimes or home time -** Castle role play supports early time awareness as children act out "banquet time," "bedtime in the castle," or "guard changing time," helping them link play sequences to real daily routines. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Estimates of numbers of things, showing understanding of relative size -** Children estimate how	**explores fitting into spaces -** Under-the-sea environments encourage children to move toy fish through tunnels, place crabs under "rock arches," and navigate their bodies around water trays, developing spatial awareness. • **Explores how things look from different viewpoints including things that are near or far away -** Children notice how sea creatures look different when viewed close-up or from a distance, such as watching fish float near the surface or spotting shells at the bottom of the tray. • **Makes simple constructions -** Building small "rock pools," coral towers or sand structures helps children explore balance, shape and early problem-solving through ocean-themed construction play. • **Explores differences in size, length, weight and capacity -** Water play supports exploration of mathematical concepts as children compare big and small fish, long and short seaweed, heavy and light shells, and fill or empty containers of different capacities. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Enjoys reciting numbers from 0 to 10 and back from 10 to 0 -** Children practise counting forwards and backwards while counting sea creatures, shells or bubbles in water play. In transition-to-school routines, they recite numbers during lining-up,

	Pigs, noticing when sets have the same number. • **Uses some number names and number language within play, and may show fascination with large numbers -** Traditional Tales encourage number talk such as "three bears", "three goats", "one wolf", helping children use number words naturally during story retelling and small-world play. • **Counts up to five items, recognising that the last number said represents the total counted so far -** Children count story props like five porridge oats, five bricks or five steps to the cottage, strengthening their understanding of cardinality. • **Through play and exploration, beginning to learn that numbers are made up of smaller numbers -** Using story materials (e.g., combining two sticks and one brick to build a house), children explore how small groups join to make a total, supporting early composition skills. • **Responds to and uses language of position and direction -** Story play involves positional language such as "over the bridge", "under the table", "behind the door", helping children follow and use directional vocabulary. • **Shows awareness of shape similarities and differences between objects -** Children compare the shapes of houses, beds or bowls in *Goldilocks*, or notice the different shapes of the pigs' building	• **Links numerals with amounts up to 5 and maybe beyond -** Matching "3 passengers" to the bus with a number 3, or placing 4 cars in the "car park" labelled 4, helps children connect numerals with real quantities. • **Beginning to use understanding of number to solve practical problems in play and meaningful activities -** Children solve simple problems such as "How many more passengers do we need?", "Do we have enough fuel cans?", or "How many cones to block the road?", applying number knowledge in purposeful ways. • **Beginning to recognise that each counting number is one more than the one before -** Travel play supports "one more" thinking: adding one more passenger to the train, one more suitcase to the trolley, or one more car to the queue. • **Predicts, moves and rotates objects to fit the space or create the shape they would like -** Children rotate and position vehicles to fit into garages, align train track pieces or park cars in tight spaces, strengthening spatial reasoning and problem-solving. • **Chooses items based on their shape which are appropriate for the child's purpose -** Selecting the right shapes for building roads, bridges or runways (long rectangles, arches, cylinders) helps children understand how shape supports function.	small-world jungles or on "safari hunts", touching each one as they say the number, strengthening one-to-one correspondence and stable number order. • **Subitises one, two and three objects -** Quick glances at groups of animals (three lions, two monkeys) help children recognise small quantities without counting, especially during tidy-up, feeding time or matching games. • **Explores using a range of their own marks and signs to which they ascribe mathematical meanings -** Children create marks to represent animal footprints, enclosure sizes or "how many animals live here", giving their drawings early mathematical meaning. • **Separates a group of three or four objects in different ways, beginning to recognise that the total is still the same -** Children split groups of animals into different combinations—two zebras in the cave and one outside—and begin to notice that the total stays the same, supporting early number composition. • **Responds to both informal language and common shape names -** Wild-animal habitats encourage children to use shape language such as "circle cave", "square pen", "triangle mountain", as well as informal terms like "round" or "pointy". • **Attempts to create arches and enclosures when building, using trial and improvement to select blocks -** Children build	**in large numbers -** Children compare plant heights, leaf quantities or seed amounts using number names and symbols, showing growing interest in larger numbers when discussing growth. • **Increasingly confident at putting numerals in order 0 to 10 -** Growth charts, number lines and daily measuring routines help children order numerals as they track how plants change over time. • **Matches the numeral with a group of items to show how many there are -** Children match numerals to groups of seeds, leaves or petals, strengthening one-to-one correspondence through real, hands-on counting. • **In practical activities, adds one and subtracts one with numbers to 10 -** Growing tasks naturally introduce adding and subtracting: adding one more seed to a pot, removing one leaf to compare, or noticing when one plant grows taller than another. • **Investigates turning and flipping objects in order to make shapes fit and create models; predicting and visualising how they will look -** Children rotate pots, turn tools or flip natural materials to build garden layouts, predicting how shapes will fit when creating simple growing areas. • **Enjoys composing and decomposing shapes, learning which shapes combine to make other shapes -** Building planters, arranging soil trays or	many knights can fit on a castle wall, how many bricks are needed to build a tower, or which dragon is "bigger," strengthening early comparison and estimation skills. • **Engages in subitising numbers to four and maybe five -** Castle small-world play supports quick recognition of small quantities, such as instantly seeing "three knights" on a bridge or "four jewels" in a treasure chest without counting. • **Shows awareness that numbers are made up of smaller numbers, exploring partitioning in different ways with a wide range of objects -** Children explore partitioning by splitting groups of knights or gems into smaller sets (e.g., "two in the tower and two on the bridge"), discovering how numbers can be composed and decomposed. • **Begins to explore and work out mathematical problems, using signs and strategies of their own choice, including standard numerals, tallies and "+" or "-" -** Castle-themed problems—how many bricks are needed to finish a wall, how many knights are "one more," or how to share treasure fairly—encourage children to use numerals, tallies or simple +/– marks to record their thinking. • **May enjoy making simple maps of familiar and imaginative environments, with landmarks -** Children create simple castle maps showing towers, gates,	tidy-up counting or simple classroom number songs. • **Counts out up to 10 objects from a larger group -** Children count out fish, shells or treasure from a larger ocean collection. In school-readiness tasks, they count pencils, books or classroom objects when helping to organise or tidy. • **Begins to conceptually subitise larger numbers by subitising smaller groups within the number -** Under-the-sea small-worlds support subitising as children recognise "two and two" fish to make four or "three and two" shells to make five. In transition activities, they use this skill when sorting classroom resources into small groups. • **Uses spatial language, including following and giving directions, using relative terms and describing what they see from different viewpoints -** Children use spatial language during ocean play—placing fish *under* rocks, moving crabs *around* coral, or directing friends to the "deep sea cave." In school routines, they follow directions such as *next to*, *behind*, *in front of* when navigating the classroom. • **Uses informal language and analogies as well as mathematical terms to describe shapes -** Children describe shapes in sea creatures and underwater objects—*"round like a bubble," "pointy like a shell," "curved like a wave."* In transition-to-school contexts, they use shape language to describe

	materials, strengthening early shape recognition. • **Creates their own spatial patterns showing some organisation or regularity -** When building story settings (bridges, cottages, forests), children arrange blocks, logs or characters in repeating or organised patterns inspired by the tale. • **In meaningful contexts, finds the longer or shorter, heavier or lighter and more/less full of two items -** Traditional Tales provide natural opportunities to compare sizes and measures, such as which bowl is fuller, which stick is longer, or which material is heavier when building the pigs' houses.	• **Enjoys partitioning and combining shapes to make new shapes with 2D and 3D shapes -** Children combine blocks to build stations, airports or garages, exploring how shapes join together to create new structures. • **Explores and adds to simple linear patterns of two or three repeating items -** Travel resources lend themselves to patterning: car–bus–car, red–blue–red, or small–big–small. Children extend and create their own simple repeating patterns. • **Recalls a sequence of events in everyday life and stories -** Travel stories (*The Train Ride*, *Naughty Bus*) and role-play journeys help children recall sequences such as "first we buy a ticket, then we wait, then we get on", strengthening memory and narrative understanding.	animal homes, dens and bridges using blocks, experimenting with arches, walls and enclosures through trial and error to keep animals "safe". • **Joins in with simple patterns in sounds, objects, games and stories dance and movement, predicting what comes next -** Children copy and extend patterns such as lion–zebra–lion, stomp–stomp–roar, or slither–jump–slither, predicting what comes next through movement, sound and object play.	creating shape-based garden designs helps children explore how shapes combine and separate. • **Enjoys tackling problems involving prediction and discussion of comparisons of length, weight or capacity, paying attention to fairness and accuracy -** Children compare plant heights, soil amounts or water levels, predicting which plant will grow fastest and discussing fairness when sharing tools or resources. • **Beginning to experience measuring time with timers and calendars -** Children use timers to check watering intervals or calendars to track growth over days and weeks, building early awareness of time passing.	moats and dragon caves, strengthening spatial reasoning and early symbolic representation. • **Uses own ideas to make models of increasing complexity, selecting blocks needed, solving problems and visualising what they will build -** Building castles with blocks, loose parts or natural materials encourages children to plan, select appropriate pieces, solve construction problems and visualise their final structure. • **Becomes familiar with measuring tools in everyday experiences and play -** Children use rulers, tape measures or non-standard units to measure castle walls, compare sword lengths or check how tall a tower has grown, developing early measurement understanding.	classroom items such as books, trays and carpet spots. • **Spots patterns in the environment, beginning to identify the pattern "rule" -** Children notice patterns in shells, fish colours or seaweed arrangements and begin to identify what repeats. In school-readiness routines, they spot patterns in daily schedules, number lines or classroom displays. • **Chooses familiar objects to create and recreate repeating patterns beyond AB patterns and begins to identify the unit of repeat -** Children create patterns such as shell–fish–shell–fish or bubble–bubble–wave and identify the repeating unit. In transition-to-school activities, they recreate patterns using cubes, counters or classroom objects. • **Is increasingly able to order and sequence events using everyday language related to time -** Under-the-sea stories help children sequence events—*"First the fish swam away, then the crab hid."* In school-readiness routines, they order daily events such as *"First we hang our coat, then we sit on the carpet, then it's story time."*
Understanding the World • **People and Communities** • **The World** • **Technology** Understanding the World is embedded throughout the half-termly topic, enabling children to make meaningful connections between their own experiences and the	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Is curious about people and shows interest in stories about people, animals or objects -** Traditional Tales are full of engaging characters such as bears, pigs and goats. Children show curiosity as they explore who the characters are, what they	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Is interested in photographs of themselves and other familiar people and objects -** Children enjoy looking at photos of themselves "on a bus", "at the station" or "on holiday", helping them make connections between real	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Enjoys stories about people and nature -** Children engage with simple wild-animal stories and picture books, enjoying tales about jungles, forests and animals in their natural habitats. These stories help them connect people,	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Has a sense of own immediate family -**Children relate growing activities to home experiences, talking about family gardens, favourite flowers or helping adults water plants. This strengthens their sense of belonging and connection between home and nursery.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **In pretend play, imitates everyday actions and events from own family and cultural background -** Children act out familiar routines within castle play, such as "cooking" in the castle kitchen, "tidying" the royal room or caring for baby dragons, helping them	**2 -3 Year Olds –** • **Beginning to have their own friends -** Under-the-sea play encourages children to form early friendships as they choose familiar peers to explore water trays, share sea creatures or play together in rock-pool small worlds.

wider world. Through hands-on exploration, real-life encounters and purposeful play, children develop curiosity about people, places, technology and the natural environment. They learn about similarities and differences, notice how things work, and begin to understand cause and effect. The topic provides rich opportunities for children to talk about their families, communities and the roles of others, deepening their sense of belonging. By engaging with a range of materials, digital tools and real-world contexts, children build the foundational knowledge and awareness that prepares them for future learning across the curriculum.	look like and what they do in the story. • **Is curious and interested to explore new and familiar experiences -** Story-themed play (exploring the Bears' cottage, building the pigs' houses, crossing the "bridge") encourages children to investigate new materials and familiar props, supporting confident exploration. • **Anticipates repeated sounds, sights and actions -** Traditional Tales use predictable patterns and repeated phrases. Children begin to anticipate moments like "I'll huff and I'll puff…" or the troll jumping out, showing excitement and growing understanding of story rhythm. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Shows interest in the lives of people who are familiar to them -** Traditional Tales introduce characters with clear roles (families, workers, helpers). Children relate these to people they know, comparing their own experiences with those of the Bears, the Pigs or Jack's family. • **Enjoys joining in with family customs and routines -** Many tales include home routines such as cooking, tidying, eating or bedtime. Children enjoy acting these out in role-play, linking story events to their own family life. • **Comments and asks questions about aspects of their familiar world -** Children ask questions	experiences and travel-themed play. They recognise familiar people in pictures and begin to talk about journeys they have taken. • **Explores objects by linking together different approaches -** Transport play encourages children to explore vehicles using multiple senses and actions: pushing, rolling, filling, emptying, opening doors, turning wheels and testing ramps. They experiment to see what moves fast, what gets stuck and how different vehicles behave. • **Shows interest in toys with buttons, flaps and simple mechanisms -** Travel-themed toys such as buses with opening doors, cars with buttons, trains with switches or garages with lifts encourage children to explore early technology. They press, twist, lift and slide mechanisms to see what happens, building curiosity and cause-and-effect understanding. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Remembers and talks about significant events in their own experiences -** Children enjoy recalling real journeys such as going on a bus, visiting the train station or going on holiday. They talk about who they travelled with, what they saw and how they felt, strengthening memory and narrative skills. • **Recognises and describes special times or events -** Travel often links to meaningful events—day	places and nature in meaningful ways. • **Remembers where objects belong -** During small-world wild-animal play, children remember where different animals "live"—the lion in the cave, the monkey in the tree, the fish in the water—showing developing memory and categorisation skills. • **Matches parts of objects that fit together -** Children match animal puzzles, connect animal bodies, or pair baby animals with their adults, strengthening early problem-solving and visual-spatial understanding. • **Seeks to acquire basic skills in turning on and operating some digital equipment -** Simple wild-animal apps, sound buttons or electronic animal toys motivate children to press switches, tap screens or activate sounds, helping them develop early digital awareness in a purposeful context. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Shows interest in different occupations and ways of time -** Children explore roles such as zookeepers, vets, rangers and explorers. Through role-play, stories and small-world setups, they learn about people who care for animals and work in different environments around the world. • **Knows some of the things that make them unique -** Comparing themselves to wild animals—how they move,	• **Notices details features of objects in their environment -** Exploring plants closely helps children notice small details such as tiny leaves, soil textures, seed shapes or colour changes. Growing activities naturally encourage careful observation and curiosity. • **Operates mechanical toys -** Children use simple tools and mechanisms such as watering cans, spray bottles, wind-up garden toys or child-safe diggers. These experiences help them understand cause and effect while practising early technological skills. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Enjoys joining in with family customs and routines -** Children relate growing activities to familiar home routines such as watering plants, gardening with family or noticing changes in nature during walks. This strengthens their sense of belonging and helps them connect nursery learning with family life. • **Talks about past and present events in their own life -** Growing and measuring provide rich opportunities for children to talk about what happened *before* ("My plant was tiny last week") and what is happening *now* ("It's taller today"), supporting early understanding of time and change. • **Looks closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change in nature -** Children compare plant sizes, leaf shapes, colours and growth	connect home experiences with imaginative medieval settings. • **Can talk about some of the things they have observed -** Exploring castle small-worlds and outdoor "castle spaces" encourages children to talk about what they notice—tall towers, heavy stones, noisy dragons—strengthening early observation and descriptive language. • **Plays with the water to investigate low technology -** Water play becomes castle-themed as children pour water into "moats," watch it flow under bridges or fill buckets to "put out dragon fires," supporting early scientific exploration of movement, flow and cause-and-effect. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Knows that other children to not always enjoy the same things -** During castle role play, children notice that friends may prefer different characters or activities (building towers, caring for dragons, acting as knights), helping them understand varied interests and respect others' choices. • **Knows about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects, materials and living things -** Exploring castles encourages children to compare features such as stone walls, wooden drawbridges, metal shields or fabric capes, and to talk about how dragons, horses and people differ,	• **Learns that they have similarities and differences -** Exploring sea creatures helps children notice similarities and differences—*"My fish is big, yours is small"*—and begin to recognise that friends may like different ocean activities. • **Enjoys playing with small world reconstructions -** Children engage deeply with under-the-sea small worlds, moving fish through tunnels, placing crabs under rocks and exploring coral caves, strengthening imagination, language and early social play. • **Uses pipes, funnels and other tools to transport water -** Water play supports exploration and problem-solving as children pour water through pipes, funnels and tubes to create "underwater rivers," developing coordination and curiosity. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** • **Knows about similarities and differences between themselves and others -** Under-the-sea play encourages children to compare their ideas, preferences and experiences with friends, such as noticing who prefers exploring shells, who enjoys water play or who likes particular sea creatures. In transition-to-school activities, they recognise similarities and differences in routines, interests and new classmates. • **Talks about the features of their own immediate environment -** Children

	about forests, cottages, bridges or farms seen in stories, helping them make sense of the world around them through familiar settings. • **Talks about why things happen and how things work -** Traditional Tales prompt early reasoning: Why did the house blow down? How did Jack climb the beanstalk? Children begin to explain cause and effect using simple story examples. • **Knows how to operate simple equipment -** Children use simple tools such as torches, CD players or story buttons to explore Traditional Tales, strengthening their confidence with basic technology. • **Shows an interest in technological toys with knobs or pulleys -** Story-themed small-world toys (castles with drawbridges, pulleys for lifting "bricks", knobs to open cottage doors) encourage children to explore how mechanisms work within a playful story context.	trips, holidays, visiting family. Children describe these special journeys, sharing details such as "We went on a plane" or "We saw the sea", helping them connect past experiences to current learning. • **Developing an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time -** Transport play supports early understanding of change: noticing how vehicles move faster or slower, how tracks or roads get messy and need fixing, or how weather changes journeys (rain, wind, puddles). Children begin to talk about things changing over time. • **Shows skill in making toys work by pressing parts or lifting flaps -** Travel-themed toys such as buses with opening doors, cars with buttons, trains with switches or garages with lifts encourage children to explore simple mechanisms and early technology through purposeful play. • **Knows that information can be retrieved from the internet -** Children begin to understand that adults use phones or tablets to check travel information—maps, bus times, weather for a journey, or photos of places. They see that digital tools help people plan and find out where to go.	what they eat, where they live—helps children recognise their own characteristics, preferences and abilities, strengthening their sense of identity. • **Shows care and concern for living things and the environment -** Children feed, wash and protect toy animals, water plants in "habitats", and handle small creatures gently outdoors. These experiences nurture empathy and respect for living things. • **Begin to understand the effect their behaviour can have on the environment -** Through discussions about litter in animal habitats, keeping water trays clean, or protecting outdoor areas where insects live, children start to understand how their actions impact the natural world. • **Plays with a range of materials to learn cause and effect -** Children explore how sand pours to make "desert dunes", how water flows to create "rivers", or how blocks fall when building animal enclosures. These hands-on experiences help them understand simple scientific ideas.	patterns, noticing how things change over time. They begin to identify similarities and differences between plants and natural materials with increasing accuracy. • **Completes a simple program on a device -** Children use simple digital tools—such as plant-growth apps, digital timers or interactive stories—to track growth, explore plant life cycles or follow step-by-step planting instructions, strengthening early technological understanding.	strengthening early classification skills. • **Uses ICT hardware to interact with age appropriate computer software -** Children use tablets or computers to explore simple castle-themed apps, view images of real castles, or complete drag-and-drop building games, developing confidence with digital tools. • **Can create contact such as a video recording -** Children record short videos of their castle models, knight role play or storytelling, learning how to capture and share digital content with growing independence.	describe features of their nursery environment and compare them with under-the-sea small worlds—talking about water, sand, rocks and coral. In transition-to-school contexts, they talk about features of their new classroom, outdoor area and shared spaces. • **Makes observations of animals and plants -** Sea-themed exploration encourages children to observe toy sea creatures, shells, seaweed and water movement, describing what they notice. In transition-to-school activities, they observe plants, insects and natural features in their new school environment. • **Develops digital literacy skills by being able to access, understand and interact with a range of technologies -** Children use simple digital tools to explore ocean content—viewing pictures of sea creatures, watching short underwater clips or using apps to build coral reefs. In transition-to-school routines, they practise using classroom technologies such as interactive screens, digital storybooks or simple learning apps. • **Can use the internet with adult supervision -** With an adult, children safely explore age-appropriate online content such as ocean photos, maps or short videos. In transition-to-school contexts, they learn that technology in school must be used safely, with

						grown-ups guiding searches and helping them access information. •
Expressive Arts and Design **• Creating with Materials** **• Being Imaginative and Expressive** Expressive Arts and Design is woven meaningfully throughout the half-termly topic, enabling children to explore ideas, stories and concepts through creative, imaginative and open-ended experiences. Children use a wide range of materials, tools and media to represent their thinking, respond to what they have learned and express themselves in ways that feel personal and purposeful. Through role-play, music, movement, construction and art, children deepen their understanding of the topic while developing creativity, problem-solving skills and confidence in sharing their ideas. The provision encourages children to experiment, make choices and develop their own interpretations, ensuring Expressive Arts and Design enriches and strengthens learning across the topic.	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Continues to explore and experiment with a range of media and movement -** Traditional Tales invite children to explore different movements such as tiptoeing into the Bears' cottage, stomping like the Giant or running like the Gingerbread Man. They experiment with media by using paint, sensory trays or small-world props to recreate story scenes. **• Moves while singing, whilst listening to music and while playing with sounds -** Repeated phrases and rhythmic patterns in stories (e.g., "Trip-trap, trip-trap" from *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*) encourage children to move, sing and make sounds. They enjoy marching like the soldiers, tapping like the woodcutter or swaying like trees in the forest. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** **• Explores and learns how sounds and movements can be changed -** Children experiment with loud/quiet, fast/slow and big/small movements as they act out characters such as the Giant, the Three Bears or the Billy Goats, learning how to adapt their bodies and voices to match the story. **• Continues to explore moving in a range of ways -** Traditional Tales encourage varied movement: tiptoeing into the Bears' cottage, stomping like the Giant,	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Mirrors and improves actions they've observed -** Children copy travel-themed movements such as turning wheels, flying like aeroplanes or chugging like trains. They begin to improve these actions, adding speed, sound or direction as they imitate adults and peers. **• Sings whilst listening to music -** Travel songs and sound effects (bus engines, train whistles, boat horns) encourage children to sing along while listening, helping them match rhythm and tune during shared musical play. **• Expresses self through physical actions and sound -** Children express excitement, energy and ideas through movement and sound—beeping horns, stomping like passengers, zooming like rockets or swaying like boats—using their bodies and voices to bring travel experiences to life. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** **• Sings familiar songs -** Children enjoy singing well-known travel songs such as *The Wheels on the Bus* or *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*, using familiar rhythms and phrases to bring journeys to life. **• Taps out simple repeated rhythms -** Travel-themed rhythms (train beats, car engines, boat splashes) encourage children to tap	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Notices and becomes interested in the effect of their actions -** Children explore cause and effect as they make "animal footprints" in paint, splash like crocodiles in water trays or knock down block "caves". They begin to notice how their actions change materials and environments. **• Pretends that one object represents another -** Children use symbolic play, turning sticks into "animal food", blocks into "dens", or leaves into "nests". This early imaginative thinking is strengthened through wild-animal role-play. **• Creates sound effects and movements -** Children enjoy roaring like lions, stomping like elephants or slithering like snakes. They use their bodies and voices to represent animals, building confidence in expressive movement and early drama. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** **• Develops an understanding of using lines to enclose a space -** Children draw animal enclosures, dens and habitats, using lines and shapes to create spaces for lions, elephants or monkeys. This helps them understand how lines can form boundaries and closed areas. **• Uses various construction materials -**	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Joins in singing songs -** Children join in with simple growing-themed songs about rain, sunshine, seeds and plants. Repeating actions and words helps them connect music with natural cycles and early understanding of growth. **• Creates sounds by rubbing, shaking, tapping, striking or blowing -** Growing activities provide rich opportunities for sound exploration: tapping pots, shaking seed packets, rubbing leaves or blowing gently on soil. Children experiment with natural materials to create sounds linked to their environment. **• Uses everyday materials to explore, understand and represent their world -** Children use soil, seeds, leaves, sticks and water to represent growing ideas—making marks in soil, creating simple plant collages or filling pots. These sensory experiences help them understand growth and change through hands-on exploration. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** **• Begins to build a collection of songs and dances -** Children enjoy learning and performing growing-themed songs and dances, such as movements that show seeds sprouting, plants stretching or rain falling. This builds a growing	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Shows an interest in the way instruments sound -** Children explore castle-themed sounds using instruments, experimenting with "clashing shields," "marching drums," or "dragon roars," helping them notice differences in pitch, volume and rhythm. **• Experiments with ways to enclose a space, create shapes, sounds and objects -** Building small castles with blocks, creating simple dens for dragons, or arranging towers encourages children to explore shape, space and structure while also experimenting with sound effects linked to their creations. **• Begins to make believe by pretending using sounds, movements, words and objects -** Castle role play invites children to use imaginative sounds (roaring dragons, clanking armour), movements (marching knights, sneaking guards) and simple props to act out early stories, strengthening symbolic play. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** **• Uses their increasing knowledge and understanding of tools and materials to explore their interests -** Children use tools confidently to build castles, design shields or create dragon habitats, choosing materials such as blocks, fabric, clay or	**2 -3 Year Olds –** **• Enjoys and responds to playing with colour in a variety of ways -** Children explore ocean colours by painting waves, sorting blue and green objects, watching coloured water swirl, and responding with excitement as they mix colours to create "sea shades." **• Uses 3D and 2D structures to explore materials -** Under-the-sea small worlds encourage children to build simple 3D coral towers, place fish in caves, and explore flat 2D images of sea creatures, strengthening spatial awareness and material exploration. **• Creates rhythmic sounds and movements -** Children make rhythmic "ocean sounds" using shakers, drums and tapping sticks, and move their bodies like sea creatures—wiggling like fish, snapping like crabs or swaying like seaweed—developing musicality and expressive movement. **3 – 4 Year Olds –** **• Expresses and communicates working theories, feels and understands using a range of art forms -** Children use painting, movement, music and small-world play to express ideas about sea creatures, waves and underwater habitats. In transition-to-school contexts, they use art forms to communicate feelings

	galloping like a horse or creeping through the forest, supporting coordination and imaginative physical play. • **Enjoys joining in with moving, dancing and ring games -** Children join in with circle games and dances linked to stories, such as moving in time to "Trip-trap, trip-trap" or dancing like woodland animals, building rhythm and social participation. • **Uses movement and sounds to express experiences, expertise, ideas and feelings -** Through role-play, children express emotions such as fear (running from the wolf), excitement (climbing the beanstalk) or curiosity (exploring the cottage), using movement and sound to communicate ideas. • **Experiments and creates movement in response to music and stories -** Story soundtracks, rhythm sticks or simple instruments inspire children to create movements that match the mood of the tale—gentle swaying for the forest, strong stomps for the Giant, quick steps for the Gingerbread Man. • **Sings to self and makes up songs -** Children invent simple songs about characters ("Run, run, Gingerbread Man!") or retell parts of the story through singing, supporting early composition and imaginative language use.	out steady patterns using instruments or body percussion, strengthening coordination and musical awareness. • **Develops an understanding of how to create and use sounds -** Children explore how to make different travel sounds—slow/fast train noises, loud/quiet engines, swooshing aeroplanes—experimenting with volume, tempo and pitch. • **Continues to explore colour and how colours can be changed -** Travel art activities such as painting sunsets, traffic lights, road scenes or sea journeys help children mix colours, create gradients and explore how colours change when combined. • **Creates sounds, movements, drawings to accompany stories -** When sharing travel stories like *The Train Ride* or *Naughty Bus*, children add their own sound effects, movements and drawings to retell journeys, deepening narrative understanding. • **Notices what other children and adults to -** In shared travel play, children observe how others move, build, drive or create sounds, then adapt or extend these ideas—copying a friend's "engine noise" or improving an adult's road layout.	Children build caves, bridges, nests and shelters for wild animals using blocks, crates, natural materials and loose parts. They explore balance, height and structure through hands-on construction. • **Uses tools for a purpose -** Children use scissors to cut out animal shapes, paintbrushes to add stripes or spots, and scoops or tongs to "feed" animals. Their tool use becomes more intentional and linked to meaningful outcomes. • **Engages in imaginative play based on own ideas or first-hand experiences -** Children act out jungle adventures, recreate zoo visits or invent animal stories. Their play becomes more detailed and narrative-driven, drawing on personal experiences and interests. • **Uses available resources to create props or creates imaginary ones -** Children turn sticks into binoculars, boxes into jeeps, fabric into rivers or leaves into animal food. They use both real and imaginary props to enrich their wild-animal play. • **Plays alongside other children -** Children join others in small-world jungles, build shared habitats or take part in group role-play as herds, packs or families of animals. They learn to play cooperatively while maintaining their own ideas.	repertoire of familiar routines linked to nature. • **Makes music in a range of ways -** Children explore sounds inspired by growing—tapping pots, shaking seed containers, rustling leaves or using instruments to represent rain and sunshine. They begin to create simple musical patterns linked to growth cycles. • **Create representations of both imaginary and real lift ideas, events, people and objects -** Children draw, paint or model real plants they observe, as well as imaginary gardens or magical growing worlds. They represent growth, change and measurement through increasingly detailed creative work. • **Initiates new combinations of movements and gestures -** Growing and measuring inspire children to invent new movements—stretching tall like plants, curling small like seeds, or moving slowly like roots spreading. They combine gestures to express growth sequences creatively.	natural items to explore how different resources behave and what they can create. • **Develops their own ideas through experimentation with diverse materials -** Castle-themed making encourages children to test ideas—trying out ways to strengthen a tower, experimenting with textures for a dragon's cave or combining materials to create armour—supporting imaginative thinking and problem-solving. • **Chooses particular movements, instruments, sounds, colours and materials for their own purposes -** Children select purposeful creative elements: marching like knights, using drums for "castle alarms," choosing bold colours for shields or soft materials for royal capes, showing growing intention and control in expressive choices.	about starting school, new routines and friendships. • **Uses combination of art forms -** Under-the-sea exploration encourages children to combine drawing, building, music and role play—such as creating coral reefs, adding ocean sounds and acting out underwater adventures. In school-readiness activities, they combine mark-making, construction and storytelling to represent classroom experiences. • **Responds imaginatively to art work and objects -** Children respond creatively to sea-themed images, shells, coral and underwater videos, imagining stories or movements inspired by what they see. In transition-to-school contexts, they respond to classroom displays, books and objects with imaginative ideas and questions. • **Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play -** Under-the-sea role play inspires rich narratives—rescuing fish, exploring deep-sea caves or going on submarine missions. In school-themed play, children create narratives about starting the school day, being the teacher or helping friends settle in. • **Plays cooperatively as part of a group -** Ocean-themed group play encourages cooperation as children share resources, negotiate roles and work together to build underwater worlds. In transition-to-school routines, they practise cooperative behaviours

						such as taking turns, tidying together and participating in group learning.
Key Outcomes At Cradley Nursery, our topic-based approach ensures that children make meaningful progress across all areas of learning by engaging with themes that spark curiosity, deepen understanding and build essential early skills. Each topic is carefully planned to provide rich opportunities for children to develop their communication and language through new vocabulary, storytelling and high-quality interactions; strengthen their personal, social and emotional development by working cooperatively, expressing feelings and building confidence; and enhance their physical development through fine- and gross-motor experiences linked to real contexts. Across all topics, children explore the world around them, developing early knowledge in Understanding the World through hands-on investigation, problem-solving and exposure to diverse people, places and cultures. Creativity is nurtured through expressive arts, enabling children to represent ideas, stories and experiences in imaginative ways. These topic-related outcomes ensure that learning is purposeful, engaging and developmentally appropriate, supporting every child to make strong progress and	**2 -3 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Begin to show interest in familiar characters — pointing to the wolf, bears, pigs, giants. • Play alongside others — using puppets and small-world story sets. • Show simple preferences — choosing favourite stories or characters. **Communication & Language** ● Name characters and objects — “bear”, “pig”, “wolf”, “bed”. ● Copy repeated refrains — “Run, run, as fast as you can!” ● Follow simple story-related instructions — “Put the bear in the bed.” **Physical Development** ● Develop fine-motor skills — turning pages, placing characters in small-world scenes. ● Move like story characters — stomping like giants, tiptoeing like Goldilocks. **Literacy** ● Join in with familiar stories — pointing to pictures, anticipating key moments. ● Make early marks linked to stories — drawing bears, houses, gingerbread men. **Mathematics** ● Explore size language — big/medium/small bowls, chairs, beds.	**2 – 3 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Show interest in vehicles — watching cars, buses and trains in small-world play. • Begin to share transport toys — taking turns with cars, planes and boats. • Show simple preferences — choosing favourite vehicles. **Communication & Language** ● Name familiar vehicles — car, bus, train, boat, plane. ● Copy vehicle sounds — “brum brum”, “choo-choo”, “beep beep”. ● Follow simple instructions — “Put the car on the road.” **Physical Development** ● Develop fine-motor control — pushing cars, placing vehicles on tracks, turning wheels. ● Move like vehicles — flying like planes, chugging like trains. **Literacy** ● Join in with transport stories — pointing to pictures, repeating key words. ● Make early marks — drawing tracks, roads or wheel marks. **Mathematics** ● Explore big and small vehicles — comparing sizes of cars, trucks and buses. ● Count small groups — “How many cars?” **Understanding the World**	**2 – 3 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** ● Begin to show care for animals — showing gentle hands when playing with animal toys. ● Share animal resources — taking turns with puppets, figures and small-world sets. ● Express simple preferences — choosing favourite wild animals. **Communication & Language** ● Use single words and simple phrases — naming animals (lion, monkey, elephant). ● Copy animal sounds — roaring, squeaking, trumpeting. ● Follow simple instructions — “Put the tiger in the cave.” **Physical Development** ● Move like animals — crawling like bears, stomping like elephants. ● Develop fine-motor control — placing animals in habitats, turning pages in animal books. **Literacy** ● Join in with animal stories — pointing to pictures, repeating sounds. ● Make early marks — drawing “animal tracks”. **Mathematics** ● Sort animals — big/small, land/water.	**2-3 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** ● Show curiosity about plants growing — noticing changes in seeds, shoots and flowers. ● Begin to care for living things — helping water plants with adult support. **Communication & Language** ● Name simple plant parts — leaf, flower, stem. ● Use simple phrases — “big plant”, “tiny seed”. ● Follow simple instructions — “Put soil in the pot.” **Physical Development** ● Develop fine-motor skills — scooping soil, sprinkling seeds, pouring water. ● Move with control — carrying small watering cans or pots. **Literacy** ● Join in with growing stories — pointing to pictures, repeating key words. ● Make early marks — drawing “tall plants” or “seed shapes”. **Mathematics** ● Explore big and small — comparing plant sizes. ● Begin to use simple size language — big, little, tall. **Understanding the World** ● Notice changes over time — seeds sprouting, plants growing.	**2 – 3 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** ● Show interest in castle play — exploring small-world castles, knights and dragons. ● Begin to play alongside others — using figures and props in shared spaces. ● Show simple preferences — choosing favourite characters (knight, king, dragon). **Communication & Language** ● Name simple characters — knight, king, queen, dragon. ● Copy simple phrases or sounds — “roar”, “clang”, “open gate”. ● Follow simple instructions — “Put the knight on the horse.” **Physical Development** ● Develop fine-motor control — placing figures in towers, opening drawbridges. ● Move like characters — marching like knights, tiptoeing like castle guards. **Literacy** ● Join in with castle stories — pointing to pictures, repeating key words. ● Make early marks — drawing towers, dragons or shields. **Mathematics** ● Explore big and small — comparing big/small towers or dragons.	**2 – 3 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** ● Show curiosity about sea creatures — exploring fish, crabs, turtles and shells in sensory trays. ● Begin to play alongside others — sharing sea animals and small-world resources. ● Express simple preferences — choosing favourite sea creatures. **Communication & Language** ● Name simple sea animals — fish, crab, shark, turtle. ● Copy sea-related sounds — “splash”, “swish”, “bubble”. ● Follow simple instructions — “Put the fish in the water.” **Physical Development** ● Develop fine-motor control — scooping shells, placing creatures in water, magnetic fishing. ● Move like sea animals — wiggling like fish, snapping like crabs. **Literacy** ● Join in with sea-themed stories — pointing to pictures, repeating key words. ● Make early marks — drawing waves, bubbles or fish shapes. **Mathematics** ● Explore big and small creatures — comparing sizes of fish or shells.

build the foundations they need for future success.	• Count small groups — "3 bears", "3 pigs". **Understanding the World** • Explore materials from stories — straw, sticks, bricks. • Notice simple story settings — forest, cottage, castle. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Use props in role-play — masks, puppets, story baskets. • Create simple story-themed art — bear faces, gingerbread men, houses. **3 – 4 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Work cooperatively in story play — taking roles such as the bears, pigs or giants and negotiating who will be which character. • Show empathy for characters — talking about how characters feel (e.g., "Goldilocks made Baby Bear sad"). • Develop confidence in group storytelling — sharing ideas and joining in with repeated refrains. **Communication & Language** • Use descriptive language — "big, medium, small", "strong house", "angry wolf". • Answer 'why' and 'how' questions — "Why did the wolf blow the house down?" • Retell simple stories — using props, sequencing cards or puppets.	• Notice different types of transport — land, air and water. • Explore simple travel experiences — talking about going in the car or on the bus. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Use transport props in play — steering wheels, tickets, helmets. • Create simple vehicle art — printing with wheels, painting roads. **3 – 4 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Work cooperatively in travel role-play — airport, train station, garage. • Show awareness of safety — talking about seatbelts, crossings and helmets. **Communication & Language** • Use descriptive language — "fast train", "loud engine", "big wheels". • Answer 'why' and 'how' questions — "Why does a boat float?" • Retell simple travel experiences — holidays, bus rides, train journeys. **Physical Development** • Develop fine-motor precision — building tracks, constructing vehicles, using tools. • Move with control — obstacle courses themed around roads, runways or tracks. **Literacy**	• Count small groups — "How many monkeys?" **Understanding the World** • Notice differences between animals — fur, feathers, scales. • Explore habitats — jungle, savannah, Arctic. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Use animal props in play — masks, puppets. • Create simple animal art — handprint lions, sponge-painted giraffes. **3 – 4 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Show empathy towards animals — talking about how animals feel or need care. • Work cooperatively — building habitats together. **Communication & Language** • Use descriptive language — "The cheetah is fast", "The elephant has a long trunk." • Answer simple 'why' and 'how' questions — about animal behaviour and habitats. • Retell animal stories — using props or pictures. **Physical Development** • Develop balance and coordination — obstacle courses themed around animal movements. • Improve fine-motor skills — cutting out animal shapes, threading "snake beads". **Literacy**	• Explore natural materials — soil, leaves, water. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Create simple plant art — finger-paint flowers, leaf printing. • Use props in role-play — watering cans, pots, seeds. **3 – 4 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Show responsibility for living things — remembering to water plants or check on growth. • Work cooperatively — planting seeds together or comparing plant growth. **Communication & Language** • Use descriptive language — "tall stem", "tiny shoot", "growing bigger". • Answer 'why' and 'how' questions — "Why do plants need water?" • Retell simple growing sequences — seed → shoot → plant. **Physical Development** • Develop fine-motor precision — planting seeds, using tools, cutting leaves for collage. • Use tools safely — small trowels, scissors for plant art. **Literacy** • Recognise key vocabulary — seed, soil, stem, roots, grow. • Write simple labels — "sunflower", "bean", "soil". **Mathematics**	• Count small groups — "How many knights?" **Understanding the World** • Notice features of castles — towers, gates, flags. • Explore simple medieval objects — helmets, shields, pretend armour. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Use props in role-play — crowns, shields, cloaks. • Create simple castle art — sponge-printing bricks, making flags. **3 – 4 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Work cooperatively in role-play — taking roles such as knights, kings, queens or guards. • Show awareness of fairness and bravery — talking about helping others or protecting the castle. **Communication & Language** • Use descriptive language — "tall tower", "strong shield", "fierce dragon". • Answer 'why' and 'how' questions — "Why does the drawbridge go up?" • Retell simple castle stories — using props, puppets or sequencing cards. **Physical Development** • Develop fine-motor precision — building castles, cutting shields, threading "chainmail". • Move with control — obstacle courses themed around moats, bridges and towers.	• Count small groups — "How many fish?" **Understanding the World** • Notice features of sea animals — fins, claws, shells. • Explore water play — pouring, filling, sinking and floating. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Use sea props in role-play — nets, boats, treasure. • Create simple sea artwork — sponge-painting fish, glittery waves. **3 – 4 year olds** **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** • Work cooperatively in sea-themed play — sharing roles such as divers, explorers or sea creatures. • Show care for living things — talking about how sea creatures need clean water and safety. **Communication & Language** Use descriptive language — "shiny scales", "big fins", "deep ocean". Answer 'why' and 'how' questions — "Why do fish need gills?" Retell simple sea stories — using props or sequencing cards. **Physical Development** • Develop fine-motor precision — threading "seaweed", cutting fish shapes, sorting shells. • Move with control — balancing like crabs, swimming actions in PE. **Literacy**

	• Use story vocabulary — once upon a time, next, finally. **Physical Development** • Develop fine-motor control — building houses from straw, sticks and bricks; threading "porridge oats"; cutting out characters. • Move with control — acting out giant steps, running like the Gingerbread Man, tiptoeing through the forest. **Literacy** • Sequence story events — ordering pictures from beginning to end. • Recognise key story vocabulary — wolf, cottage, forest, porridge. • Write simple labels — "bed", "chair", "house", "wolf". • Join in with repeated refrains — "Who's been sitting in my chair!" **Mathematics** • Compare size and quantity — big/medium/small bowls, chairs and beds. • Count characters and objects — 3 bears, 3 pigs, 7 dwarfs. • Use positional language — in the forest, under the bridge, inside the cottage. **Understanding the World** • Explore materials from stories — testing straw, sticks and bricks; melting "porridge"; building bridges. • Talk about settings — forest, castle, cottage, river. • Understand simple cause and effect — "The stick	• Recognise transport vocabulary — road, track, runway, wheels. • Write simple labels — "bus", "car", "plane". **Mathematics** • Compare speed, size and length — fastest vehicle, longest train. • Use positional language — under the bridge, on the track, next to the station. • Count and sort vehicles — by colour, type or size. **Understanding the World** • Talk about different types of transport — land, air, water and their purposes. • Explore simple mechanics — wheels turning, ramps, slopes. • Discuss travel and journeys — maps, destinations, tickets. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Create detailed vehicle artwork — drawing features like windows, wheels, wings. • Engage in imaginative travel role-play — pilots, drivers, conductors. • Use music and movement — fast/slow rhythms, "train" dances.	• Recognise animal names and initial sounds — "l for lion", "z for zebra". • Create simple animal-themed marks or labels — writing "lion", "den", "zoo". **Mathematics** • Compare size and length — tallest animal, longest tail. • Count and match quantities — "3 monkeys need 3 bananas." **Understanding the World** • Talk about habitats and climates — jungle, desert, Arctic. • Understand simple life cycles — frogs, butterflies, penguins. • Use technology to find information — watching short animal clips. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Create detailed animal artwork — patterns, textures, collage. • Engage in imaginative role-play — safari guides, vets, explorers.	• Compare height and length — measuring plants with cubes or string. • Use comparative language — taller, shorter, longer. • Count and record growth — "My plant has 4 leaves." **Understanding the World** • Understand what plants need to grow — water, sun, soil. • Observe changes over time — recording growth in simple charts. • Explore life cycles — seed to plant. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Create detailed plant artwork — drawing stems, leaves, petals with increasing accuracy. • Use imaginative play — garden centre, allotment, florist	**Literacy** • Recognise castle vocabulary — tower, moat, drawbridge, armour. • Write simple labels — "castle", "dragon", "shield". **Mathematics** • Compare height and size — tallest tower, biggest dragon. • Use positional language — on the tower, under the bridge, inside the castle. • Sort and count objects — shields, helmets, flags. **Understanding the World** • Talk about life in the past — knights, kings, queens, castle living. • Explore simple mechanisms — how drawbridges lift, how gates open. • Investigate materials — bricks, stone, wood for building. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Create detailed castle artwork — drawing battlements, shields, dragons. • Engage in imaginative role-play — knights' quests, royal banquets, dragon rescues. • Use music and movement — marching rhythms, medieval dances.	• Recognise sea-related vocabulary — ocean, coral, fin, shell. • Write simple labels — "fish", "shark", "sea". **Mathematics** • Compare size and length — longest fish, biggest shell. • Use positional language — under the water, on the rock, next to the coral. • Sort and count sea objects — shells, stones, creatures. **Understanding the World** • Talk about sea habitats — coral reefs, deep sea, rock pools. • Explore floating and sinking — testing objects in water. • Discuss environmental care — keeping oceans clean, protecting animals. **Expressive Arts & Design** • Create detailed sea artwork — collage fish, textured waves, jellyfish crafts. • Engage in imaginative role-play — divers, mermaids, submarines. • Use music and movement — exploring rhythms and dances from different cultures.

	house blew down because it wasn't strong." **Expressive Arts & Design** • Create detailed story-themed artwork — painting cottages, designing gingerbread men, making masks. • Engage in imaginative role-play — acting out scenes, using props, retelling stories with expression. • Use music and movement — giant stomping rhythms, soft fairy-tale dances.					
Impact The EYFS curriculum at Cradley Nursery provides children with a rich, balanced and ambitious foundation for lifelong learning. Through carefully planned experiences, responsive interactions and an enabling environment, children make strong progress across all seven areas of learning. They develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to thrive as confident, curious and capable learners.	The *Traditional Tales* topic has a powerful impact on children's communication, imagination and early learning across the EYFS. Through exploring familiar stories, characters and repeated patterns, children develop rich language, early narrative understanding and a strong foundation for future reading and writing. **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** Children build confidence as they take on roles from stories and explore characters' feelings, choices and relationships. They learn about fairness, kindness and consequences through tales such as *Goldilocks* or *The Three Little Pigs*. They begin to show empathy for characters, understand simple moral messages and work cooperatively in shared role-play. The topic strengthens relationships with peers and adults as children negotiate roles, share ideas and solve small	The *Transport & Travel* topic broadens children's understanding of movement, place and purpose across the EYFS. By exploring different ways of travelling, planning pretend journeys and engaging with maps, routes and real-world travel experiences, children develop confident communication, early reasoning skills and a growing awareness of how people move through the world. The topic offers rich opportunities for imaginative play, physical exploration and collaborative problem solving, supporting children to make meaningful connections between their own experiences and the wider community. **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** Children develop a strong sense of agency as they take on purposeful travel roles—route planners, ticket collectors, pilots, cyclists and navigators. Working together to organise journeys	The *Wild Animals* topic has a powerful impact on children's curiosity, communication and early learning across the EYFS. Through exploring animal movements, habitats, behaviours and imaginative scenarios, children develop rich vocabulary, early scientific understanding and a deeper connection with the natural world. The topic provides meaningful, hands-on opportunities for movement, sensory exploration, storytelling and role play, laying strong foundations for future learning. **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** Children build confidence as they take on purposeful roles—zookeepers, vets, explorers and animal carers—and work cooperatively with others to create habitats, care for animals or act out shared stories. They learn to negotiate roles, compromise and manage small conflicts	The *Growing & Measuring* topic nurtures children's curiosity, independence and early scientific thinking across the EYFS. By planting seeds, observing change, comparing growth and exploring natural materials, children develop a secure understanding of how living things grow and how change can be measured. The topic offers rich opportunities for hands-on exploration, purposeful talk, early problem solving and creative expression, supporting children to make meaningful connections between their actions and the natural world. **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** Children develop a strong sense of responsibility as they care for plants, manage tools safely and take part in shared routines such as watering, checking growth and recording changes. They work collaboratively—deciding who will fetch soil, who will measure stems or	The *Knights & Castles* topic provides a rich, imaginative context that strengthens children's curiosity, communication, physical development and early thinking across the EYFS. Through exploring castle structures, medieval characters, dragons, shields and small-world environments, children engage in meaningful play that supports language growth, social understanding, creativity and early problem-solving. The topic encourages children to connect real experiences with imaginative ones, building confidence, independence and a secure foundation for future learning. **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** Children develop confidence and emotional security as they take on purposeful roles such as knights, kings, queens, guards and dragons. Younger children begin to recognise that others may	The *Under the Sea* and *Transition to School* topics have provided a rich, interconnected learning experience that has supported children's progress across all seven areas of the EYFS. Through imaginative ocean-themed exploration, purposeful school-readiness routines and carefully planned opportunities for communication, creativity and problem-solving, children have demonstrated strong developmental gains and increasing readiness for Reception. **Personal, Social & Emotional Development** Children show growing confidence in forming relationships and working cooperatively as part of a group. Through shared ocean-themed play, they negotiate roles, take turns and manage small conflicts, demonstrating secure social awareness. They articulate their wants and needs clearly, seek adult support

	conflicts within their imaginative play. **Communication & Language** Children develop strong listening and attention skills as they join in with repeated refrains and anticipate key events. They use new vocabulary linked to characters, settings and actions, and begin to talk in longer sentences to explain what is happening. They retell simple stories, answer questions about events and predict what might happen next, strengthening narrative understanding and expressive language **Physical Development** Children move in varied ways as they act out story scenes—tiptoeing, stomping, climbing or running. They develop balance and coordination through role-play settings such as bridges, cottages or forests. They begin to notice the effects of activity on their bodies and take practical action to stay safe during energetic play. Fine-motor skills are strengthened through handling books, props, puppets and mark-making tools linked to the tales. **Literacy** Children enjoy listening to familiar stories and begin to understand how tales are structured. They show interest in illustrations and print, join in with repeated phrases and begin to retell stories in their own words. They give meaning to their	encourages cooperation, turn-taking and shared decision-making. Children learn to manage small disagreements, such as who will steer or which route to follow, and begin to show sensitivity to others' feelings when someone is waiting, delayed or needs help. Predictable routines—checking "stations," following signals, organising queues—support self-regulation and help children understand how rules keep everyone safe. **Communication & Language** The topic provides a rich context for developing confident, purposeful talk. Children use increasingly precise vocabulary linked to travel—*route*, *destination*, *map*, *journey*, *stop*, *signal*—and begin to explain their ideas in longer, more detailed sentences. They listen carefully to instructions, respond to directional language and ask thoughtful questions about how vehicles work or where journeys lead. Retelling real and imagined travel experiences strengthens narrative skills and helps children organise their thoughts in sequence. **Physical Development** Children move with increasing control and coordination as they act out journeys and navigate travel-themed environments. They practise balancing, steering, pedalling and manoeuvring around obstacles, strengthening	as they decide who will be which animal or how the play will unfold. The topic strengthens empathy as children show care for living things, notice when animals "need help" and understand how their actions affect the environment. Predictable routines such as feeding times, cleaning habitats and following simple "animal rules" support emotional regulation and early self-control. **Communication & Language** Children develop strong listening and attention skills as they follow instructions linked to animal movements, habitats and small-world play. They use new vocabulary related to animal features, habitats and behaviours, and begin to talk in longer sentences to describe what animals are doing or where they live. They ask questions about how animals survive, predict what might happen next in animal stories and retell familiar tales, strengthening narrative understanding and expressive language. Sound play—roaring, hissing, stomping—supports early phonological awareness. **Physical Development** Children move in varied and imaginative ways as they act out animal movements—stomping like elephants, slithering like snakes, climbing like monkeys or creeping like tigers. They develop coordination, balance and spatial awareness as they navigate	who will label pots—strengthening cooperation and turn-taking. The topic encourages children to persevere, noticing that growth takes time and learning to wait for changes to appear. Caring for living things supports empathy and helps children understand how their choices affect the environment around them. **Communication & Language** Growing and measuring provide rich opportunities for purposeful conversation. Children use increasingly precise vocabulary—*root*, *stem*, *shoot*, *longer*, *shorter*, *heavier*, *lighter*—and begin to explain their observations in full sentences. They listen carefully to instructions during planting and measuring tasks and respond with thoughtful questions about what plants need or why they change. Children talk confidently about past and present events, describing what their plant looked like before and how it has changed over time, strengthening early reasoning and narrative skills. **Physical Development** Children refine both gross and fine motor skills through practical growing tasks. They carry watering cans, scoop soil, handle seeds and navigate outdoor spaces with increasing control. Fine motor strength develops through careful pouring, pinching seeds, using tools and making marks linked to growth patterns. Outdoor exploration encourages	have different ideas or preferences, showing early empathy and care during shared castle play. They seek comfort from familiar adults when play becomes busy and learn to distract themselves with quieter castle activities. Older children become more flexible and cooperative, negotiating roles, sharing resources and working together to build castles or act out stories. They express their needs clearly—choosing props, suggesting ideas and explaining how they want the story to unfold. They begin to repair small conflicts, such as disagreements over roles or knocked-down towers, and show growing ability to manage feelings when their wishes cannot be met. Children's growing autonomy is strengthened as they make choices, assert ideas and reflect on what they can do well and what they are getting better at. **Communication & Language** Castle play provides a rich environment for developing listening, attention and expressive language. Younger children enjoy experimenting with sounds—clashing shields, roaring dragons—and begin to understand simple questions such as *who*, *what* and *where*. They rapidly learn new vocabulary such as *castle*, *tower*, *shield*, *dragon*, *king* and *bridge*, using these words confidently in play. Older children show two-channelled attention, listening to castle stories	appropriately and show awareness of behaviour expectations in both sea-themed environments and transition-to-school routines. These experiences have strengthened independence, emotional regulation and readiness for new social contexts. **Communication & Language** Children listen and respond thoughtfully to others' ideas, particularly during collaborative small-world ocean play and group discussions about school routines. They use increasingly complex language to organise and sequence their thinking, and confidently answer *who, why, where, when* and *how* questions. Narrative skills have developed strongly, with children introducing imaginative storylines into both underwater adventures and school-themed role play. **Physical Development** Children demonstrate improved fine-motor control through sea-themed mark-making, drawing waves, shells and sea creatures, and through transition-to-school writing tasks such as name cards and simple labels. They show a clear preference for a dominant hand, use anticlockwise movements and begin forming recognisable letters. They handle tools safely, transport and store equipment responsibly and practise safety measures independently, showing

	drawings, create simple story maps and include early writing in their play—labels, signs, lists or character names—laying strong foundations for reading and writing. **Mathematics** Children explore counting and comparison through story props—three bears, three pigs, one wolf. They notice size differences (big, medium, small), compare lengths and weights of materials and use positional language such as "over", "under" and "behind" during story play. They begin to recognise simple patterns and explore early number composition through hands-on, meaningful contexts. **Understanding the World** Children learn about different homes, materials, environments and simple technologies through story settings. They ask questions about how things work—why the house blew down, how the beanstalk grew, why the troll guarded the bridge. They relate story events to their own experiences and begin to understand similarities and differences between people, places and cultures. **Expressive Arts & Design** Children express themselves through movement, music, role-play and creative arts inspired by the tales. They use props, puppets and small-world resources to recreate scenes, experiment with character voices and invent their own story	spatial awareness and gross motor confidence. Fine motor skills develop through connecting tracks, turning wheels, pressing buttons, drawing maps and creating tickets. Outdoor travel play encourages children to notice how movement affects their bodies and to make safe choices during energetic activity. **Literacy** Children engage enthusiastically with travel-themed stories, beginning to recognise how journeys unfold across a narrative. They show interest in environmental print—road signs, numbers, arrows, maps—and begin to understand that these symbols provide information. Early writing becomes purposeful as children create tickets, signs, labels, maps and passenger lists. Their drawings show increasing detail as they represent vehicles, routes and destinations, laying secure foundations for reading and writing. **Mathematics** The topic offers meaningful opportunities for counting, comparison and problem solving. Children count wheels, seats, passengers and stops, and compare the sizes and lengths of different vehicles. They use positional language confidently—*next to*, *behind*, *under*, *in front of*—as they navigate routes or organise small world scenes. Pattern awareness develops through repeated sequences such as car–bus–	"jungles", crawl through "dens" and move around obstacles. Fine motor skills are strengthened through handling small-world animals, building habitats, using tools to create patterns such as stripes or spots, and making marks inspired by animal tracks. Children begin to notice the effects of activity on their bodies and take practical action to stay safe during energetic outdoor play. **Literacy** Children enjoy listening to animal-themed stories and begin to understand how narratives are structured with a beginning, middle and end. They show interest in print around them—animal labels, signs and fact cards—and begin to recognise that these symbols carry meaning. They give meaning to their drawings, create simple story maps and include early writing in their play—feeding charts, habitat labels, signs or animal names—laying strong foundations for reading and writing. Repetitive animal rhymes and chants support rhythm, rhyme and early phonological awareness. **Mathematics** Children explore counting and comparison through meaningful animal contexts—counting animals, comparing sizes, matching footprints or sorting creatures by features. They notice size differences between animals, compare lengths of habitats and use positional language such as	confident movement—stretching to compare heights, crouching to examine roots and moving safely around planting areas. Children begin to recognise how physical activity affects their bodies and make choices to stay safe and comfortable. **Literacy** Children engage deeply with stories and information texts about plants, gardens and growth. They begin to understand how texts can teach them new information and enjoy retelling planting sequences in their own words. Print in the environment—labels, charts, seed packets and simple instructions—supports early reading behaviours as children recognise that symbols carry meaning. Writing becomes purposeful: children create labels, draw diagrams, record measurements and produce simple lists or captions. Their drawings and marks show increasing detail as they represent real observations from their growing experiences. **Mathematics** The topic provides meaningful contexts for early mathematical thinking. Children count seeds, compare plant heights, match numerals to quantities and order numbers on growth charts. They explore early addition and subtraction naturally—adding one more seed, noticing when one plant becomes taller or removing a leaf to compare.	while continuing their building or role play. They begin to understand humour through playful dragon antics or silly knight behaviour. They follow oral stories without pictures, imagining characters and events with increasing detail. Their language becomes more complex as they recreate roles, link statements and maintain a clear storyline during castle quests and adventures. **Physical Development** Children strengthen gross and fine motor skills through castle-themed movement and construction. Younger children practise walking, running and climbing across varied surfaces, stepping over "moats," climbing small "castle steps," and marching like knights. They develop ball skills by kicking "cannonballs," throwing soft "boulders," and catching large balls during knight-training games. Dressing up in simple costumes supports independence in self-care and dressing routines. Older children travel confidently under drawbridges, over castle walls and around towers, showing increasing control and coordination. They handle tools and materials with growing precision—building castles, designing shields, fastening costume pieces and arranging props. They initiate and describe their own movements, such as creeping like guards or swooping like dragons. Predictable routines within	readiness for classroom expectations. **Literacy** Children engage deeply with books and reading materials, drawing on phonics to decode simple words in sea-themed stories and early school texts. They recognise digraphs such as *sh*, *th* and *ee*, read some high-frequency words and include everyday literacy artefacts—labels, signs, envelopes and instructions—in their play. Their developing phonic knowledge supports early writing, enabling them to produce simple labels, captions and name writing linked to both ocean exploration and transition routines **Mathematics** Children show strong progress in number, pattern, shape and spatial reasoning. They count and subitise sea creatures, recite numbers forwards and backwards, and confidently count out objects from larger groups. They use spatial language to navigate underwater worlds and school spaces, describe shapes using both informal analogies and mathematical terms, and spot patterns in the environment. They create repeating patterns beyond AB sequences and identify the unit of repeat. Sequencing skills are strengthened through ordering events in stories and daily routines. **Understanding the World** Children observe sea creatures, shells and water movement closely,

	endings. They explore how sounds and movements can be changed and create imaginative responses to music and story rhythms. **Overall Impact** The *Traditional Tales* topic helps children develop: • rich language and storytelling skills • confidence in expressing ideas and emotions • strong listening and attention • early reading and writing behaviours • curiosity about characters, settings and the world • creativity through movement, music and imaginative play It lays the foundation for early literacy, social understanding and a lifelong enjoyment of stories—key building blocks for future learning across the EYFS.	car or track–bridge–track. Children solve practical problems such as how many more passengers are needed or how to fit vehicles into a space, strengthening early reasoning. **Understanding the World** Children deepen their understanding of how people travel and why journeys happen. They explore different types of transport, talk about places they have visited and begin to recognise similarities and differences between environments. The topic encourages children to think about distance, direction and purpose, linking travel experiences to their own lives. They explore simple mechanisms—buttons, levers, wheels—and begin to understand that digital tools such as maps, weather apps or timetables provide useful information. **Expressive Arts & Design** Children express their ideas creatively through movement, music, role play and construction inspired by travel. They recreate stations, roads, airports and harbours using small world resources and loose parts, developing imaginative storylines and characters. They explore colour, shape and texture through painting roads, landscapes and sky scenes, and build models of vehicles and bridges using a range of materials. Sound exploration—engine noises, beeps, swooshes—supports imaginative play and creative expression.	"under", "behind", "next to" and "in the cave" during play. They begin to recognise simple patterns (lion–zebra–lion), explore shape through building enclosures and dens, and solve practical problems such as how many animals fit in a space or how to divide food fairly. **Understanding the World** Children learn about different animals, habitats and environments. They ask questions about how animals move, what they eat, where they live and how they survive. They relate animal experiences to their own lives—zoo visits, pets, nature walks—and begin to understand similarities and differences between creatures, climates and ecosystems. They explore simple technologies such as animal sound buttons, digital animal stories or child-friendly apps, and begin to understand how people care for animals and protect the environment. **Expressive Arts & Design** Children express themselves through movement, music, role play and creative arts inspired by wild animals. They use props and small-world resources to recreate jungles, savannahs or forests, experiment with animal sounds and create imaginative responses to animal stories. They explore colour, pattern and texture through painting stripes, spots, fur or feathers, and create models of animals, habitats or dens using a range of materials.	Children investigate length, weight and capacity through soil, water and natural materials, paying attention to fairness and accuracy. They begin to use timers and calendars to track growth over days and weeks, strengthening early time awareness. **Understanding the World** Children develop a secure understanding of how plants grow and what they need to thrive. They observe similarities and differences between plants, notice patterns in nature and talk about changes over time. The topic encourages children to connect their learning with real experiences—gardens at home, family routines and seasonal changes. They explore simple technologies such as digital timers, child-friendly apps or interactive stories to support their understanding of growth, demonstrating progress in early technological awareness. **Expressive Arts & Design** Children express their ideas creatively through drawing, painting, modelling and imaginative play inspired by growth and nature. They explore colour, shape and texture as they represent leaves, stems, roots and flowers. Music and movement become linked to natural processes—children create sounds inspired by rain or sunshine and invent movements that show stretching, sprouting or growing. Small world play becomes richer as children	castle play reinforce consistent patterns in eating, toileting and resting. **Literacy** Children engage enthusiastically with castle stories, rhymes and role-play narratives. Younger children begin to recognise simple symbols such as shields, flags and crowns, and enjoy mark-making on varied textures—drawing towers in sand, pressing shapes into playdough or creating castle pictures on touch-screens. Older children recall and discuss castle stories, retelling events and describing characters with increasing detail. They begin to recognise familiar written names on castle registers or role-play labels. Castle vocabulary supports phonological awareness as children explore rhymes (*king–ring–sing*), alliteration (*brave bold knight*), and initial sounds (*k* for *king*, *d* for *dragon*). They practise segmenting and blending simple words such as *tower*, *shield* and *crown*, and start linking sounds to letters through castle signs and labels. **Mathematics** Castle play provides meaningful opportunities for counting, comparison and early problem-solving. Younger children practise saying numbers in order while counting knights, dragons or bricks. They respond to positional language—placing characters *on* towers, hiding dragons *under* bridges—and	developing early scientific thinking. They talk about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and compare features of their nursery environment with underwater small worlds. Transition-to-school activities support understanding of new environments, routines and relationships. Digital literacy develops through safe use of technology to explore ocean content and interact with school-based digital tools, always with adult supervision. **Expressive Arts & Design** Children express ideas, feelings and working theories through a wide range of art forms, combining drawing, movement, music and construction to represent underwater scenes and school experiences. They respond imaginatively to sea-themed artwork, shells and videos, and create rhythmic sounds and movements inspired by ocean life. Narrative play is rich and sustained, with children developing storylines in both sea-themed and school-themed contexts. Cooperative creative play strengthens group interaction and shared imagination. **Overall Impact** The *Under the Sea* and *Transition to School* topics have provided a highly effective foundation for Reception readiness. Children demonstrate secure progress across all areas,

		Overall Impact The *Transport & Travel* topic supports children to develop: • confident communication and vocabulary linked to movement and place • cooperation, turn-taking and early self-regulation • strong listening, attention and problem-solving skills • purposeful early reading, writing and mark-making • curiosity about journeys, environments and how people travel • creativity through movement, construction, music and imaginative play It lays secure foundations for early literacy, mathematical reasoning, social understanding and a lifelong interest in exploring the world—key building blocks for future learning across the EYFS.	Imaginative play becomes richer as children develop their own storylines and characters. **Overall Impact** The Wild Animals topic helps children develop: ● rich vocabulary and communication linked to nature and living things ● confidence in expressing ideas, feelings and imaginative choices ● strong listening, attention and early problem-solving skills ● early reading, writing and mark-making behaviours ● curiosity about animals, habitats and the wider natural world ● creativity through movement, music, construction and imaginative play It lays the foundation for early literacy, mathematical thinking, social understanding and a lifelong curiosity about the natural world—key building blocks for future learning across the EYFS.	build gardens, arrange natural materials and develop imaginative storylines linked to growth and change. **Overall Impact** The *Growing & Measuring* topic supports children to develop: • confident communication and rich vocabulary linked to growth and change • independence and responsibility through caring for living things • strong fine and gross motor skills through practical, hands-on tasks • early reading, writing and mark-making behaviours with real purpose • mathematical thinking through comparison, counting and measurement • curiosity about nature, environments and how things grow • creativity through movement, music, construction and imaginative play The topic lays secure foundations for scientific thinking, early mathematics, expressive communication and a lifelong interest in the natural world—key building blocks for future learning across the EYFS.	begin to recognise matching shapes such as round shields or square blocks. Predictable castle routines help them anticipate what happens next. Older children estimate quantities, compare sizes of dragons or towers and engage in early subitising (instantly recognising small groups of knights or jewels). They explore partitioning by splitting groups into smaller sets (e.g., "two knights in the tower and two on the bridge"). Castle-themed problems encourage them to use tallies, numerals or simple +/– marks to record thinking. They create simple maps of castle environments and build increasingly complex models, selecting blocks purposefully and solving construction challenges. Measuring tools support early understanding of height, length and size as they compare towers or sword lengths. **Understanding the World** Children explore similarities and differences between castle materials, characters and environments. Younger children imitate familiar routines within castle play—cooking in the castle kitchen, caring for baby dragons or tidying the royal room—connecting home experiences with imaginative settings. They talk about what they observe in castle small-worlds and investigate simple cause-and-effect through water play in "moats" or dragon-fire buckets. Older children recognise that friends may enjoy different	increased independence, strong communication skills and the ability to apply learning across contexts. They show curiosity, confidence and resilience, and are well-prepared for the expectations, routines and learning experiences of their next stage in education.

					castle activities and begin to compare places, objects and materials such as stone walls, wooden bridges or metal armour. They use ICT to explore castle images, complete simple building apps or view videos of real castles. They create digital content such as short video recordings of their models or role-play scenes, developing confidence with technology. **Expressive Arts & Design** Children express creativity through movement, music, construction and imaginative storytelling. Younger children explore castle sounds using instruments, experiment with enclosing spaces to build dens or towers, and begin to pretend using sounds, movements and simple props. Older children use tools and materials purposefully to design shields, build castles or create dragon habitats. They develop ideas through experimentation—testing ways to strengthen towers or combining textures for armour. They choose movements, sounds, colours and materials intentionally, such as marching like knights, using drums for "castle alarms," or selecting bold colours for royal capes. **Overall Impact** The *Knights & Castles* topic supports children to develop: • confident communication and rich vocabulary • cooperation, empathy and early emotional regulation • strong gross and fine motor skills through	

					purposeful movement and construction • early reading, mark-making and phonological awareness • curiosity about materials, environments and simple technologies • creativity through music, movement, building and imaginative storytelling • early mathematical reasoning, problem-solving and spatial awareness The topic lays secure foundations for future learning across the EYFS, supporting children to explore, imagine and connect with the world through meaningful, playful experiences rooted in medieval adventure.	