



## The Spiking Heat of Inspiration

### Our Mission Statement:

*"Inspiring children and adults to find and express their unique voice through transformative, creative experiences."*

### The theme:

*'...the opening rays of Father Sun toss our blanket aside as upturned faces accept the spiking heat of inspiration.'* Pearl Stewart, *The Classroom Visit*, *Voices*, 2013

*'The basic idea of the Pushkin spirit was to give children back their voices. Such would happen if an environment of trust could be provided and an educational impulse towards the whole person of each child. The Pushkin initiative acts as a catalyst to engage imagination, release creativity, and enable the full expression of the whole person.'* *Where the Pushkin Feather Landed*, Abbott Mark Patrick Henderman OSB, *Sourcing Voices*, 2014

The Pushkin Trust's theme for this year '**the spiking heat of inspiration**', was inspired by the chapter, 'The classroom visit', written by Pearl Stewart, Trustee, in the book *Voices*. In this chapter she details the impact of the Pushkin approach and how a workshop in her classroom brought a spice and a vibrance of inspiration where 'sloppy copies feel the weight and speed of ideas, memories and stories.' A time where ideas spun as each pupil became inspired through creativity and, as a result, each pupil found their own unique voice, finding its tune, place and a sense of pride.

This year's theme explores the element of **fire** and its place in the classroom to ignite minds and imagination as well as a passion for what each child has within, to speak, to write and to explore through creativity to get their self-expression out. Creativity this year will be used to ignite. Relating to the words of Abbott Mark Patrick Henderman, our programme will be a catalyst used to entice and gather the children's vibrant creative thinking and voice, warming the furnace within themselves, to enable them to believe in themselves and to stand that bit taller, and brighter.

We hope that you enjoy this pack that aims to inspire and guide you and your class. To create with a freedom that brings spice and colour into your classroom, igniting each child's imagination and creativity within your learning environments, embracing the environment as you do so.

*Michelle Young, Thematic Unit Creator*

## **Aims & objectives:**

### **Language and literacy:**

- To consider the meaning of words, finding synonyms to expand language and meaning;
- To dig deep, exploring descriptive, vivid language and poetic tools to create a picture in the reader's mind;
- To perform the spoken word with confidence, together;
- To explore myth, story and rich illustrations to inspire creative ideas, poetry, character and meaning;
- To use shared writing as a tool to create together and model creative thinking and quality writing as a class, before individual writing;
- To write non-fiction text using technical language and non-fiction devices to inform and interest an audience;
- To express self, potential and emotions through words, language and tone;
- To listen to each other as writers, commenting on what works well and why, as well as inspiring and encouraging each other with words and ideas;
- To edit writing based on feedback and reflection;
- To write and debate from different perspectives;

### **STEM:**

- To identify layers of the earth;
- To know that heart rate is measured by an electro-cardio gram;
- Measure data and report outcomes;
- To design a rocket or imaginary idea for space travel.

### **WAU:**

- To be able to identify the planets in our solar system;
- To identify sources of fire our flame on our planet and where these are on a world map.

### **Music:**

- To inspire creativity through music;
- To draw music using symbols and art, putting it onto a page in symbolic shape, form and colour.

### **Art:**

- To create a variety of 2D and 3D art, bringing imaginations and words to life, using the mediums of paint, collage and paper-craft.

### **PDMU:**

- To describe feelings and abstract nouns through poetry, improving emotional literacy, wellbeing and communication.

## Thematic Unit Index

<p><b>The spiking heat of inspiration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poetry</li> </ul>	<p>Discover what 'Inspiration' means and feels through poetry and music.</p>
<p><b>The Whisper of Myth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poetry</li> <li>• Prose</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Comic strips</li> </ul>	<p>Inspired by Greek myths, explore Pandora's curiosity and the darkness (emotions) that lurk within Pandora's Box as well as the bright light of hope.</p> <p>Expand writing to consider problems that we face in our world today, inspired by illustrations from <i>The Arrival</i> by Shaun Tan.</p>
<p><b>My trait of curiosity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative design</li> <li>• Poetry</li> </ul>	<p>Make your own Pandora's Box decorated with poetry inspired by Kit Wright's, Magic Box.</p>
<p><b>Prometheus: Titan God of Fire</b></p>	<p>Explore the power of fire in the Greek Myth, Prometheus – the titan God of fire.</p>
<p><b>Heartbeat: My fire</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STEM</li> <li>• Mathematical enquiry</li> <li>• Reading for Pleasure</li> </ul>	<p>What makes your heartbeat fast? Children take part in mathematical enquiry and collect data regarding their pulse.</p> <p>Discuss what books excite the children. Create ECG artwork around this subject.</p>
<p><b>Sound Art</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feelings</li> <li>• Drawing</li> <li>• Colours</li> <li>• Music</li> </ul>	<p>Inspired by <i>Swinging</i> by Wassily Kandinsky, discuss what feelings look like. Listen to music, drawing the shapes that the children see individually in their mind as they listen.</p>
<p><b>Imagine: The earth's core</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science</li> <li>• Setting description</li> </ul>	<p>Inspired by the layers of the earth and Holtz, children create an imaginary world within the centre of the earth, to create rich discussion, art and narrative setting descriptions through the senses and vivid imagery.</p>
<p><b>Infinity and beyond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STEM</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Instructional writing</li> <li>• Persuasive writing</li> </ul>	<p>Discuss our solar system and the planets within it.</p> <p>Design a new planet fuelled by the children's imagination.</p> <p>Design and/or make a method of transport that brings the children to this planet, including non-fiction writing opportunities.</p>

## The spiking heat of inspiration: What could it mean?

Play a song i.e. **Jupiter, Holtz** <https://youtu.be/Gu77Vtja30c>,

**Jump, House of Pain** <https://youtu.be/ZsXRwQRrxkU>

**Mars Bars, The Undertones** [https://youtu.be/oHGOk\\_bxDcM?si=j67nP7Y8DtFR1-Qd](https://youtu.be/oHGOk_bxDcM?si=j67nP7Y8DtFR1-Qd)

Ask the children to draw the shapes, spikes or doodles that they hear or feel as they listen.

Discuss how the song made them feel and why they drew the shapes they did.

Did the song inspire them to draw? Did it inspire them to do anything else?

## Poetry

Discuss what the word INSPIRATION means

Who inspires them? What inspires them?

What colour is inspiration? Where might you find it?

Gather words and ideas: Pupils rotate around the titles on large paper and write down/ capture ideas

What colour is inspiration? Like?	Objects - nouns	How does inspiration move?	Where does inspiration live (a place) *describe it
Golden, like a kings crown Firework colours Rainbow Inky Magenta Emerald	Clouds Lights Thoughts Traffic Silence Pages	Dances Flows Sparks Churns Hides Jumps Flickers Bursts Fizzes	Above jagged mountain tops Behind a crystal waterfall In a mazed mind A bustling city A meandering stream A quite book-nook Within tattered pages

After this session, type the ideas up and place words into envelopes named: Movement/ Colour/ Where/ Objects and places. Make enough for small groups to work from these together (6 of each). To break cliché of ideas, ask the children to mix and match the ideas to create mini poems. Children build poems by matching ideas together from each envelope. Model this first showing high quality ideas. Discuss this then let the children create themselves.

*e.g. Magenta lights fizz above jagged mountain tops*

*Inky silence sparks within tattered pages*

*Golden thoughts, like a king's crown, flicker and jump through mazed minds*

Read and share each other's work. What sounds really good? Compare the combinations that children used and how they worked to paint a picture.

Make improvements where necessary. Entitle the poems, The spiking heat of Inspiration.

These poems could be recorded and placed over an image to share with parents on the school website or performed in assembly to the rest of the school.

## The Whisper of Myth

### Greek Mythology: Pandora's Box

#### Bing Videos

#### Ancient Greek mythology: 7. Prometheus and Pandora - BBC Teach

#### Suggested activities:

Watch the video clip of Pandora's Box or read the book, Pandora's Box by Rose Impey with the class.

<https://amzn.eu/d/c6SivHn>

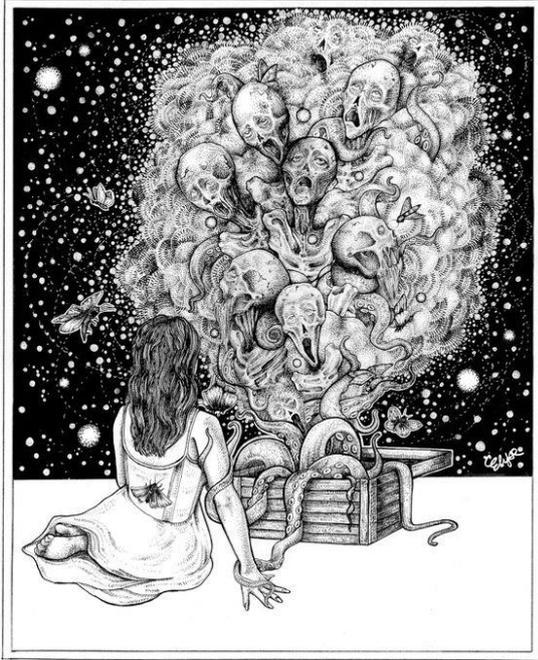
What do the children wonder? What puzzles them? Does the story connect to any other stories they know? Have a rich discussion with the class and fill out their thoughts together.

<p><b>Wonders</b> 'I wonder if...'</p>	<p><b>Puzzles</b> 'I am curious/ puzzled about...'</p>
<p><b>Connections</b> 'This story/ character reminds me of...'</p>	<p><b>A gift or a curse?</b> Discuss</p>

#### Words:

What words are they unsure of? What do these words mean?

Enigma, Mystify







Print off some images on A3 paper. Show the four images of Pandora and the box. What image are the children drawn to? Place the images in separate parts of the classroom. Ask the pupils to stand by their favourite.

Why is it your favourite? What do the images represent to you? What could each monster/ shadow represent? Discuss as a class. What darkness is in our world today? *e.g. fear, destruction, sadness, poverty, bullying, negative thoughts, anxiety...*

Pupils label the images with their thoughts.

### Writing:

Use this image from *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan to help the class discuss the darkness or problems in our world today.



What might the tails represent? Discuss.

How are they moving?

Create metaphors in shared writing with the class *e.g. War is a dragon's tail of destruction seeping through sleepy villages. Fear a tangling web, lurking around every corner...*



Write from the child's perspective. Base this on what they see, hear and feel. Look closely at the picture.

**I looked up towards the grey sky.** *Tails of fear scraped the morning's veil. Silence swallowed the streets as we walked, hand in hand. My hand gripped hers tight. Each house huddled close to the next as if they were pretending to be invisible. War writhed above in the skies. When would the next bomb hit? Where? Quickly, we shuffled through the night on cobbled streets to seek refuge. Soon, we would be safe. Hope hid on the horizon.*

Return to Pandora's box. Inspired by Shaun Tan, how do the creatures move out of the box? Gather verbs *e.g. tumble, explode, whoosh, rage, stampede*

What sounds might they make? *E.g. scream, cackle, deathly silent*

After brainstorming, allow the children to express their thoughts on paper. More able writers can work independently. Teacher may wish to do some shared writing with those who are less confident.

Play relaxing music as the children write.

**Pandora opened the box.**

### Draw:

Ask the children to lie on the floor and allow them to relax to gentle music. Ask them to scan their bodies for feelings. Are they holding on to any difficult feelings in their body? E.g. worry, anxiety, fear, sadness. Do breathing techniques with the children as they lie. Ask them to imagine golden balls or twinkles of hope falling from the ceiling, they rest on their bodies and surround each child in a bubble of golden, honey light. All negative feelings and emotions get absorbed by this light. Children do more breathing exercises as they lie on the ground, imagining themselves covered in the warmth of golden light; hope.

In groups, pupils trace around their bodies on large paper and identify feelings that they are carrying. Allow time to discuss these feelings, how they feel and healthy ways that we can deal with them.

Pupils draw their own images of fear, sadness, suffering etc. They can use the words that mean something to them, based on the previous discussion. These could be drawn or cut from large piece of black paper to create a 3D display with words tumbling from them e.g. Fear tumbles and twists through nightmares, Poverty tiptoes through unlit houses.

How did the golden light feel? How does hope make them feel? Ask the children to draw hope on a circle cut from card/ water colour paper using colouring pencils, water colours or oil pastels. Make a display with the bubbles of hope. What might hope whisper? Discuss. Write these inside the bubbles e.g. *"This too shall pass."*, *"Smile."*, *"Try not to worry."*, *"Relax."*, *"It will be ok."*

“Hope” is the thing with feathers  
That perches in the soul,  
And sings the tune without the words,  
And never stops at all.

And sweetest in the gale is heard;  
And sore must be the storm  
That could abash the little bird  
That kept so many warm.

I’ve heard it in the chilliest land  
And on the strangest sea;  
Yet, never, in extremity,  
It asked a crumb of me.

–EMILY DICKINSON



Discuss the poem line by line with the children after reading it.

Create metaphors for hope.

Hope is a thing of feathers that perches on the soul

Hope is...

*\*You could use the poetry technique used previously for ‘Inspiration’ to write metaphors for hope (see pg 4).*

In the story, Hope is a butterfly. Create Hope butterflies from filter paper, markers and water droplets to hang in the classroom.



- On circular filter paper, draw squiggles, lines or dots or colour.
- Then add small droplets of water using a pipette, allowing the water to absorb into the paper to create a unique design.
- Nip the paper in the centre and wind a pipe-cleaner around it to create the butterfly's abdomen and antenna. Put on display or hang in the classroom as a reminder of each child's hope within them.

## My trait of curiosity: Make your own Pandora's Box

Begin this project with a variety of boxes (treasure box/ jewellery box/ trinket box).

What do you think is inside this box (or boxes)? Why do you think so?

If you had a box to capture the beauty in our world, or things you are curious about, what would you put in it?

Listen to:

['The Magic Box' by Kit Wright \(poem only\) - Stories and poems: Video playlist - BBC Bitesize](#)

Listen again, ask the children to jot down the ideas that caught their attention and imaginations.

Take the time to read the poem as a class. Groups of children take a verse each to perform aloud.

Verse by verse, discuss the poets choice of objects and how he expanded the ideas.

### THE MAGIC BOX, by Kit Wright

I will put in the box

the swish of a silk sari on a summer night,  
fire from the nostrils of a Chinese dragon,  
the tip of a tongue touching a tooth.

I will put in the box

a snowman with a rumbling belly  
a sip of the bluest water from Lake Lucerene,  
a leaping spark from an electric fish.

I will put into the box

three violet wishes spoken in Gujarati,  
the last joke of an ancient uncle,  
and the first smile of a baby.

I will put into the box

a fifth season and a black sun,  
a cowboy on a broomstick  
and a witch on a white horse.

My box is fashioned from ice and gold and steel,  
with stars on the lid and secrets in the corners.  
Its hinges are the toe joints of dinosaurs.

I shall surf in my box  
on the great high-rolling breakers of the wild Atlantic,  
then wash ashore on a yellow beach  
the colour of the sun.

Next, pupils write a list of the things that they would put in their box.

From this list, spend time crafting a poem that will go with each child's own box. e.g.

<b>Objects</b>	<b>Amounts</b>	<b>Describe it with specific detail</b>	<b>Alliteration idea</b>
<i>Examples</i>	<i>A swish (sound) A sip Fire (a thing from a) Leaping spark (A movement) 3 violet (A colour) The last The first</i>	<i>fire from the nostrils of a Chinese dragon,  a sip of the bluest water from Lake Lucerne,  a leaping spark from an electric fish.</i>	<i>the swish of a silk sari on a summer night,  tip of a tongue touching a tooth.</i>
<i>Now your go... A sound</i>			
<i>A measure</i>			
<i>A thing from a</i>			
<i>A movement</i>			
<i>A colour</i>			
<i>A first</i>			
<i>A last</i>			

Model this first together as a class to generate ideas, then ask the children to do theirs

Finally, what is your box called? Where will you hide it?

**3d poetry:**

Using a cube net, children make their own boxes.

They could write their poetry in the inside and outside of the net before assembling it.

**Additional activity:**

Create a comic strip of a character who comes across your box. Who? Where? What happens?

## Prometheus: Titan God of fire

The story of Prometheus and the gift of fire is a famous myth from Greek mythology that highlights the power of knowledge, the defiance of the gods, and the consequences that follow. It revolves around the Titan Prometheus and his act of bestowing fire upon humanity, forever changing the course of human history.

Share the story of Prometheus. (See in additional PDF).

*In ancient Greek mythology Prometheus was a god of fire. He was also a trickster and a master craftsman. Prometheus was one of the Titans. The Titans were giants who once ruled the world.*

*In one story Zeus, the chief god, had Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus create the animals and people. Epimetheus made the animals first. He gave them all the best qualities, such as strength and speed. He also protected them with fur and feathers.*

*Epimetheus then realized that he had little left to give people. He asked Prometheus for help. Prometheus felt sorry for his human friends so he stole fire from the gods and gave it to humans. Fire was important for many things - like heat and cooking, and hundreds of others. Prometheus stole a lightning bolt from Zeus and hid it in a fennel flower descending Mount Olympus and gave it to mankind. That's when man discovered fire.*

*Zeus was furious. He ordered Prometheus chained to a rock as punishment for stealing his lightning bolt, and for going behind his back to help the humans. To make Prometheus even more miserable, Zeus sent storms to beat angry waves against Prometheus, helplessly chained to his rock. Zeus made the sun shine brightly to burn his skin. Every day an eagle ate Prometheus' liver and every night he grew a new liver for the bird to eat the next day (because he was immortal). It was quite a punishment for a god who had only tried to help mankind but he had defied Zeus, and that was what made Zeus so angry. Zeus also punished humans after Prometheus gave them fire. Zeus sent the first woman, named Pandora, to Earth. Her curiosity is said to have brought troubles into the world.*

*After nearly a thousand years, the hero Hercules released the helpless god from his chains.*

Discuss the following questions as a class:

*What did you like about the story? What did you dislike? What are you curious about? What surprised you?*

*In this myth, how did fire empower humans to survive? Discuss.*

*How would you describe the character of Prometheus? E.g. determined, empathetic towards humans, caring.*

*Prometheus means 'forethought', how does this story show that he thinks about the future of mankind?*

## Debate:

*Does fire help in our world today?*

*As a class, make a list of how fire helps and hinders our planet today.*

Split into groups, For and Against. Pupils create arguments for and against fire, using the discursive structure:

**We believe that...**

**Firstly,**

**Secondly,**

**Despite what some may believe,**

**In addition,**

**To conclude/ Finally**

Have a class debate whether fire is a good or a bad thing for our planet.

## Our planet:

To steal the fire, Prometheus stole a spark from Zeus's thunderbolt. He carried it in a fennel flower and this is what inspired the Olympic Torch that is carried through the streets during the Olympics every year. *What does the Olympic Torch represent?*

What other aspects of nature could Prometheus have stolen a spark or a flame from? E.g. the sun, a star, a volcano.

As a class, make a list of natural sources of fire or flame in our planet.

Split the class into groups and allow them time to research these natural sources.

- Stars
- Sun
- Volcanoes
- Lightning bolt
- Forest fires
- Earth's core
- Other ideas that the pupils may have...

With the information gathered, pupils create class podcasts **defining what it is, where they can be found** and the **facts about them**. Do the pupils wonder anything about this natural source? They could discuss these curious wonders in the podcast e.g. *'I wonder if...'*, *'We are curious whether or not...'*

From the discussion and ideas, create a poem:

*I steal a spark from the \* and...*

Before doing so, discuss other words for steal

*e.g.*

*I will steal a spark from the sun and twine it into a hundred stars*

*I will sneak and flame from a forest fire and save a glowing ember for a camp*

*I will nick a nip of lava from Mount Vesuvius and mould fire-proof warriors*

*I will embezzle a dazzling bolt from lightning and form it into ideas that inspire*

*I will syphon fire from Prometheus' belly and turn it into steely determination in mine*

*I will nab a glow of mother's love and keep it in the apple of her children's eyes*

## Crack open imaginations:

Create a character who brought fire to the world and humanity.

- *Who is the character? (An animal/ hybrid/ demi-god/ creature)*
- *What is his/her name?*
- *What powers do they have?*
- *What do they steal a spark from?*
- *Why did they steal a spark? How?*
- *What did the humans do with the spark to enable them to survive?*
- *What was the consequence to him stealing fire?*

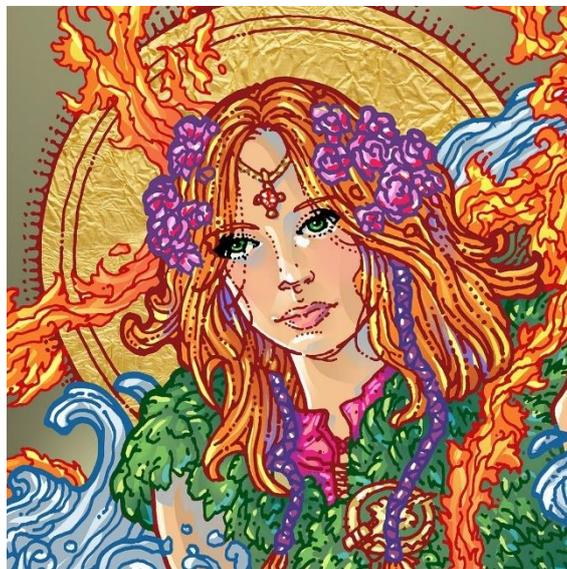
Brainstorm ideas first through class discussion and on large piece of paper in the classroom with different questions as a heading before pupils create their character.

Pupils could create comic strips or drama pieces/ a script to tell the story with their new ideas.

Pupils could create a newspaper article outlining what happened, when, how and why to recount the story in a factual piece of writing.

## Celtic Mythology: Brigid – the Celtic Goddess of fire, healing, smithcraft and poetry

Make a St Bridgit's cross





## Heartbeat: My fire



What makes your heartbeat fast?

Children find their pulse on their wrists. Can they count how many beats it makes in a minute? The average bpm of a child is 70 – 120 bpm.

### Mathematical enquiry:

Children calculate the class BPM average. Who has the highest BPM? Who has the lowest?

Ask the children to do different tasks and record their pulse/ BPM after each one.

e.g. Stand still for 30sec, walk on the spot for 30 sec, run on the spot for 30sec, do 15 jumping jacks, do a lap of the school playground. Allow breaks in between to steady the heart rate again before measuring.

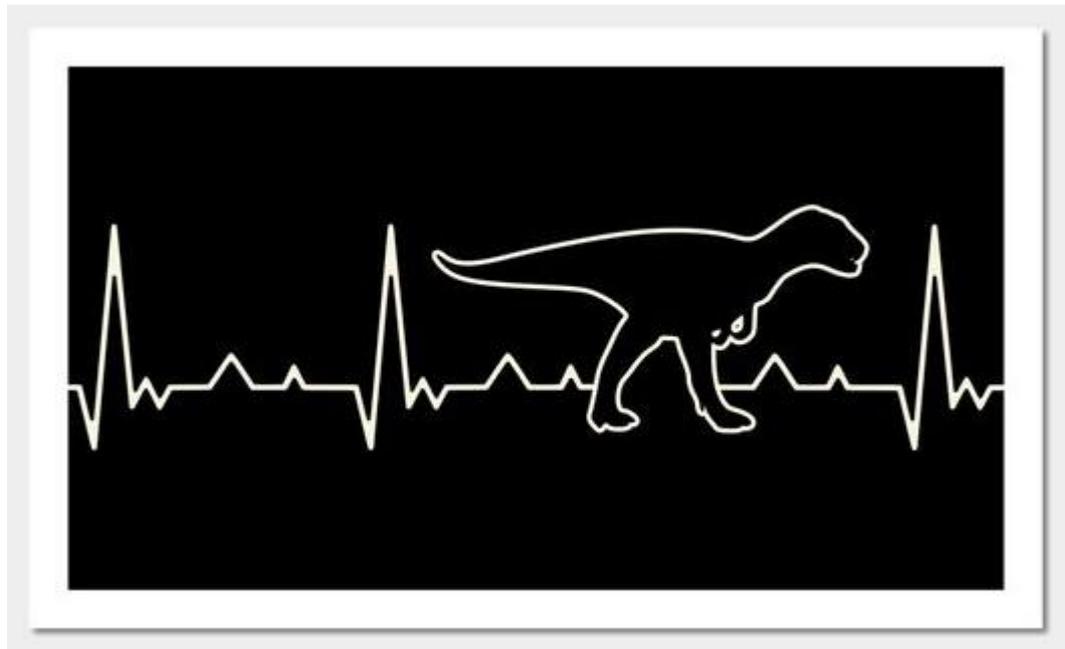
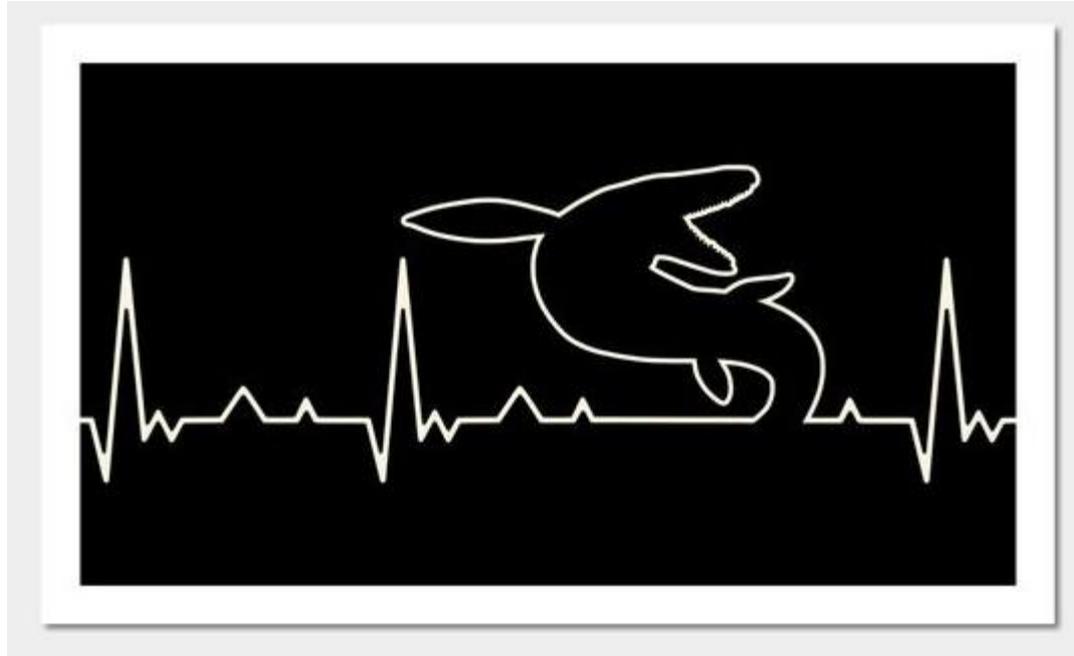
Children compile their findings in a table and create a bar chart to show the results. Can they explain why their BPM changes after different activities? Ask them to write this down.

*'From the bar chart it is clear that my bpm rises after \*, it is lower during \* because...'*



**Electrocardiography (ECG or EKG)** is a non-invasive test that monitors and records the **electrical activity of the heart**. The test is performed using electrodes placed on the skin, and the results are displayed in an electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG). The spikes up and down show that we are alive.

*What makes you feel alive? What do you love about life? What excites you?*



What excites you?

Idea: This could relate reading for pleasure and promoting a love of reading. What book excites you? Draw the outline of something from the book within the ECG.

White chalk or acrylic paint pens on black paper.

## Sound Art:



## Swinging

1925, Wassily Kandinsky

[Art and Design KS2: Kandinsky's 'Schaukeln' - BBC Teach](#)

Watch this clip

Discuss what feelings look like. Cut out shapes and colour appropriately then stick onto black, coloured or white card.

This could relate to the objects in your own Pandora's Box. You could use paints, chalk or pencils to colour with, focusing on shading light and dark to show intensity.

Secondly, listen to some music. Listen again, drawing the shapes that you see in your mind as you listen. Make a note of each shape – zig zag, lines, squiggles, coils, springs, triangle, arrows, spirals, circles – there is no wrong answer. Create art work with these shapes either by drawing them onto paper and colouring/ shading or cutting shapes out and sticking them on, as before.

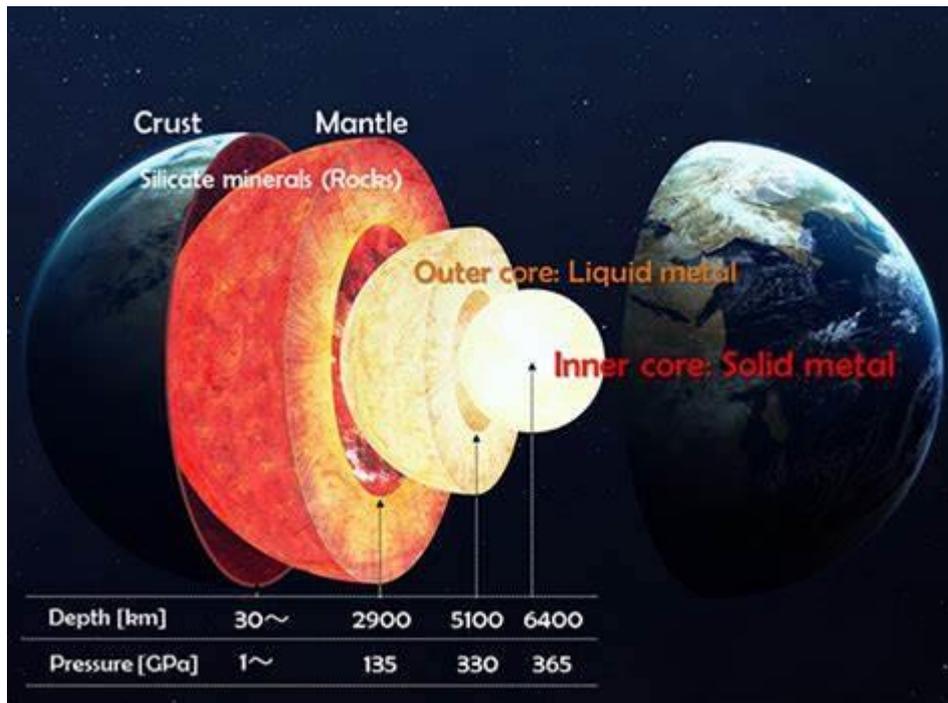
Sound	Drawing
Paper rustling	
Pencil drop	
Pen mark-making	
Pencil mark-making	
Pencils shuffled	
Sellotape	



Image from The National Academy

## Imagine

### Planet Earth: Imaginary world in the earth's core



#### [\(4\) Layers of the Earth video for Kids | Inside Our Earth | Structure and Components - YouTube](#)

Discuss the hypothesised layers of the earth.

If you were to create an imaginary world within the centre of the earth, what would it look like?

Listening to Mars the Bringer of War, <https://youtu.be/vzXX9XFyemg?si=A59-rndsm5hiYGXu>, ask the children to doodle what worlds may be within the centre of the earth.

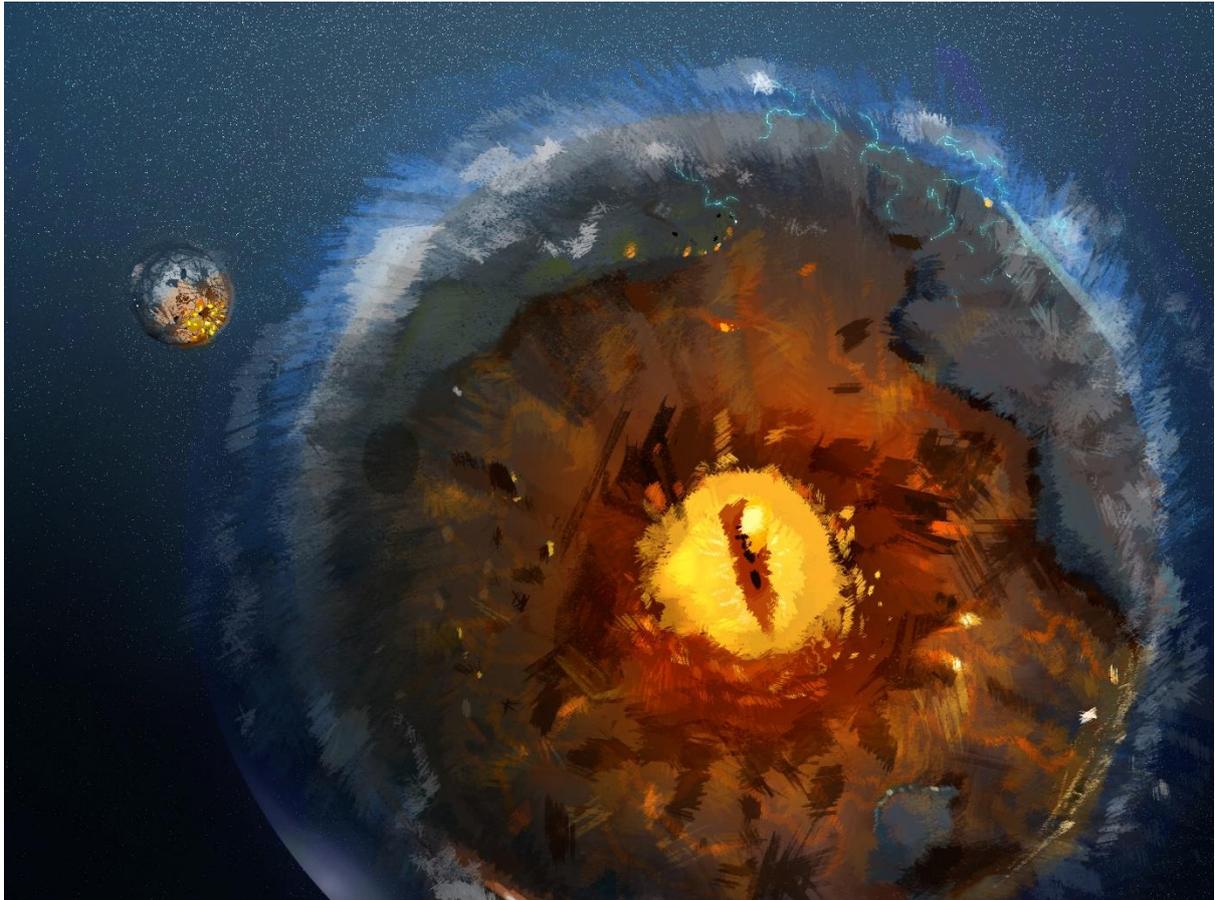
Discuss ideas and gather them on flipchart paper/ on the whiteboard to inspire.



Journey to the Centre of the Earth







Use images to spark possibilities and the children's imagination. Gather ideas of what could be at the centre of the earth if we use our imaginations to create imaginative ideas e.g. a fiery, all seeing eye, a lava world (like a lava lamp), a fiery kingdom, a hellish place of fire.

Pupils draw the world on A4 paper

Label it, to give more information

Using the senses, write a settings description to create vivid imagery of this place.

Sights:

Sounds:

How do you want the reader to feel? Use words to bring this feeling to the reader.

*We will explore narrative writing around this during our time together at the teachers' residential.*

Create an imaginary fire creature using modelling clay.

Create fact files about the creature to describe its characteristics.

*e.g.*

Name:

Danger / threat classification:

X

XX

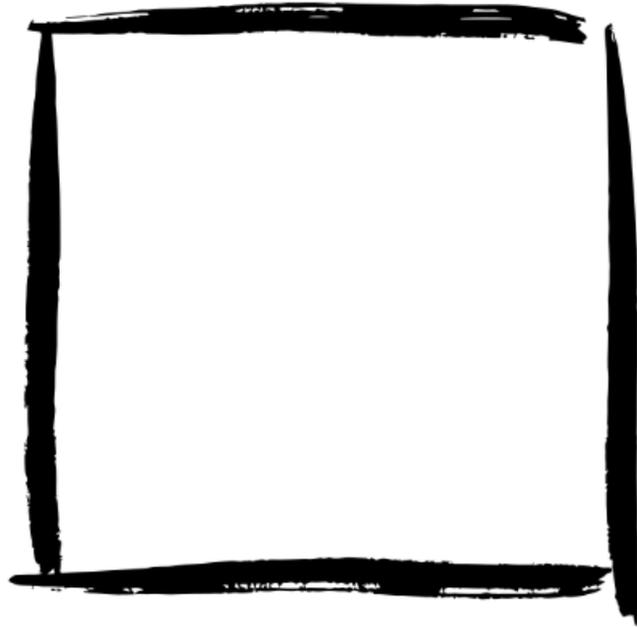
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Powers:

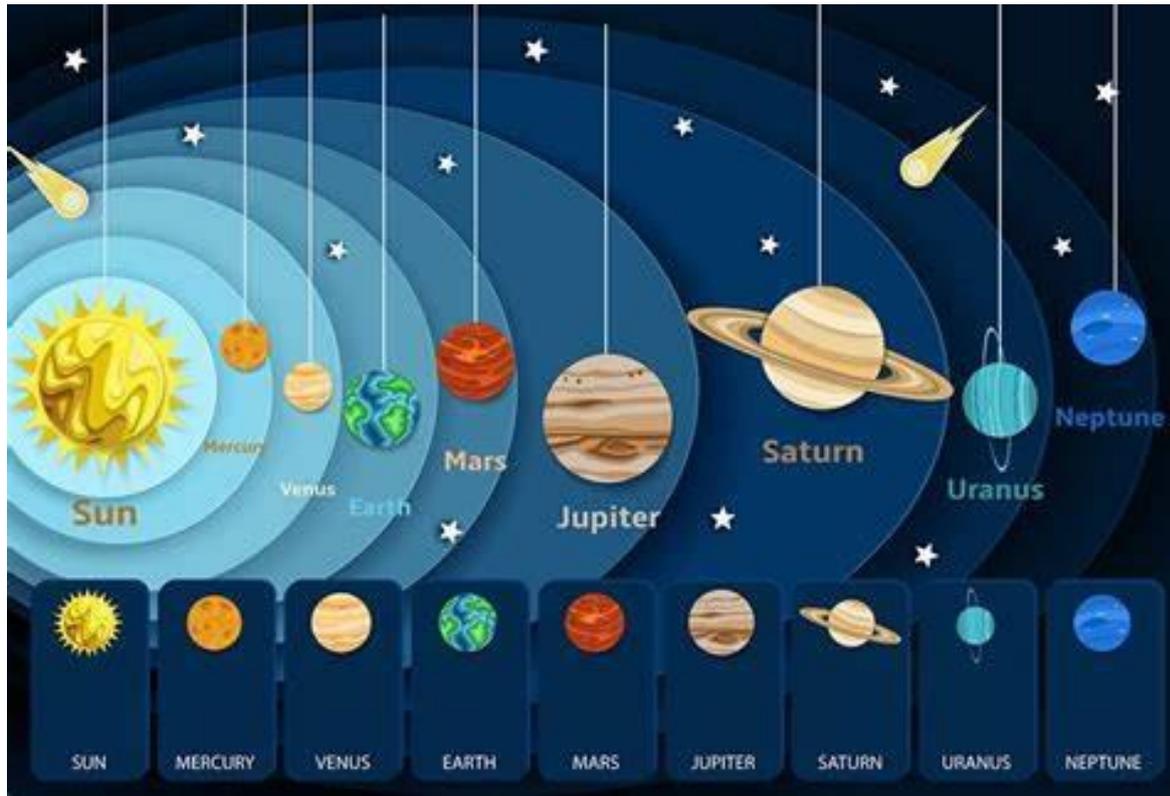
Habitat:

Diet:

Other info:



## Infinity and beyond



Discuss our solar system and the planets within it.

Show the Beastie Boys video for Intergalactic [https://youtu.be/ilnnMzK\\_m8w](https://youtu.be/ilnnMzK_m8w)

Design a new planet fuelled by the children's imagination. They can be any colour, size and shape (flat, round, square, spiral, multi-faced). Make the planets using papier mâché and ask the children to name them.

Discuss:

- Its name
- Who lives there?
- The elements on the planet
- The conditions e.g. weather/ gravity etc and its impact on what inhabits the planet
- How do you travel to it?

Design and/or make a method of transport that brings the children to this planet. Do you travel here via a space rocket or can you get there via the power of dreams? Discuss and brainstorm ideas before the children create their designs e.g. *rocket, glass elevator, cannon, laughter bubbles, Delorian style car/space machine, spaceship, shooting star, catapult...*

**Instructional writing:** Children write instructions outlining how their method of transport works. (See Nimbus 5.0 documents attached).

**Persuasive writing:** Children create an advert persuading others to buy a ticket or the machine.