

HOULTON WINTER NEWS 2022



HOULTON
SCHOOL

Welcome from the Principal

Dear Houlton family,

As we approach our second Christmas together, I couldn't be more proud of the various wonderful ways in which pupils and staff have been getting in the festive spirit and showing kindness. We had a lovely Christmas dinner together, there have been some really thoughtful College Kindness activities and, of course, our 'festive dress' day raising money for the local Rugby Myton Hospice.

Whether we be Christians, of a different faith or of none, we all enjoy the festive period here in the UK. The Christmas holiday is a time for coming together, seeing family, meeting new friends and looking out for each other, just as those in the traditional nativity story once did.

Whilst for some of our Houlton families things may be a little leaner this year, I hope that the opportunity to spend time with those we love will carry us all

through: please do look out for anyone vulnerable or who might be spending Christmas on their own and consider whether an invite in for a warm mince pie this year could make a real difference to them.

I'll be watching the first ever televised King's Speech on Christmas day with my own family and wish you, and yours, a very merry Christmas and Happy Hogmanay - see you in 2023!

Michael McCulley, Principal

Houlton School achieves 'World Class Schools' status

Pupils and staff at Houlton School are celebrating following the news that they have been awarded the World Class Schools Quality Mark (WCSQM) - joining an exclusive network of 120 of the best non-selective state schools across the UK for the quality of educational experience on offer.

In order to gain the coveted accreditation, the school took part in an entirely pupil-lead assessment process, where pupils were tasked with completing a series of challenges to showcase what makes their school World Class.

Pupils used the World Class AP to demonstrate a plethora of leadership skills and attributes as well as taking on project management lead roles in last year's Assessment Centre Day. All of the work leading to the successful accreditation was completed by pupils in Key Stage 3,

something normally supported largely by Key Stage 4 and 5 pupils. This is a significant achievement for the school and has made pupils and staff very proud.

Michael McCulley, Principal at Houlton School, said: "Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our wonderful pupils and staff, I'm delighted to confirm that Houlton School has achieved the World Class Schools status.

"Having opened our doors for the first time in September 2021, this feels like an even more significant achievement for our Houlton family, as in many cases our pupils were significantly younger than other young people that were taking part in the process.

"The level of talent and maturity shown by our pupils throughout each challenge, however, made me incredibly proud."

The World Class Schools Quality Mark (WCSQM) is awarded by an education charity of the same name, whose unique assessment framework assesses the pupils not the school, for their demonstration of 'world-class' skills and competencies. Pupils participating in the programme are encouraged to recognise and achieve their

potential through unique real-life work experiences, access to a lifelong peer support network and cultural opportunities that take them beyond their local community.

James Higham, CEO of the Transforming Lives Educational Trust (TLET), of which Houlton School is part, added: "My congratulations go to everyone at Houlton School for this tremendous achievement.

"Alongside providing an opportunity for pupils to develop World Class characteristics, this accreditation highlights the exceptional learning environment that Houlton School has to offer for every member of its community."



Sparx Update

Following the implementation of Sparx in September our pupils have been showcasing their independent learning as well as challenging each other to look at new areas of maths.

96% of Year 7 and 91% of Year 8 currently complete all their homework on time which is fantastic and puts Houlton School in the top 50 schools using Sparx out of over 1,400 school from the UK and around the world. Let's aim to be in the top 20 by Easter!

Pupils have been levelling up incredibly this term with many pupils achieving the initial level 1 (10,000 XP points) and a significant number smashing that to obtain higher levels.

At time of writing over 100 level ups have occurred this half term but imagine this would have increased by the time we reach our Christmas holiday in December. Unfortunately, there isn't enough room in this newsletter for us to celebrate all the level ups, but pupils have received a personalised certificate and R2 to celebrate their success as well as being entered into our raffle to win a £10 shopping voucher.

Currently the leaders in each college are as followed:

Year 7

- Esha** (7A) Level 7
- Niamh** (7D) Level 3
- Savannah** (7M) Level 1
- Kayla Louise** (7O) Level 1
- Waseem** (7S) Level 15
- Erin** (7W) Level 7

Year 8

- Sohana** (8A) Level 21
- Claudia** (8D) almost at Level 1
- Luca** (8M) Level 8
- Harry** (8O) Level 1
- Oskar** (8S) Level 5
- Callum** (8W) Level 5



The ranking for each college now stands as follows:



1st Shakespeare
713,282 XP



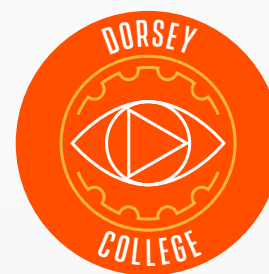
2nd Armstrong
682,783 XP



3rd Morse
473,611 XP



4th Winton
463,974 XP



5th Dorsey
285,243 XP



6th Obama
264,577 XP

Well done Shakespeare for beating the previous winner Morse last half term, what college will be the first to smash the 1,000,000 XP?

We will be awarding the top pupil in each class a prize in the last week this term to celebrate the effort they have put in – we will share this information with you via the Maths Department Twitter @HoultonMaths.

By **Miss Jasmine Etheridge**,
Head of Faculty: Mathematics and Numeracy

*Well done to Sohana
for being the highest
achiever in Year 8*

Houlton's first pets

Biology is the study of living organisms, and what better way is there to study living things than to look at them in real life.

Year 8s have continued to explore the function and structure of living things by having the opportunity to dissect real mammalian heart and lungs and look at how their structure is adapted to its specific function. Pupils enjoy the hands-on approach this provides and relish the opportunity to learn more about biology from first-hand experience.

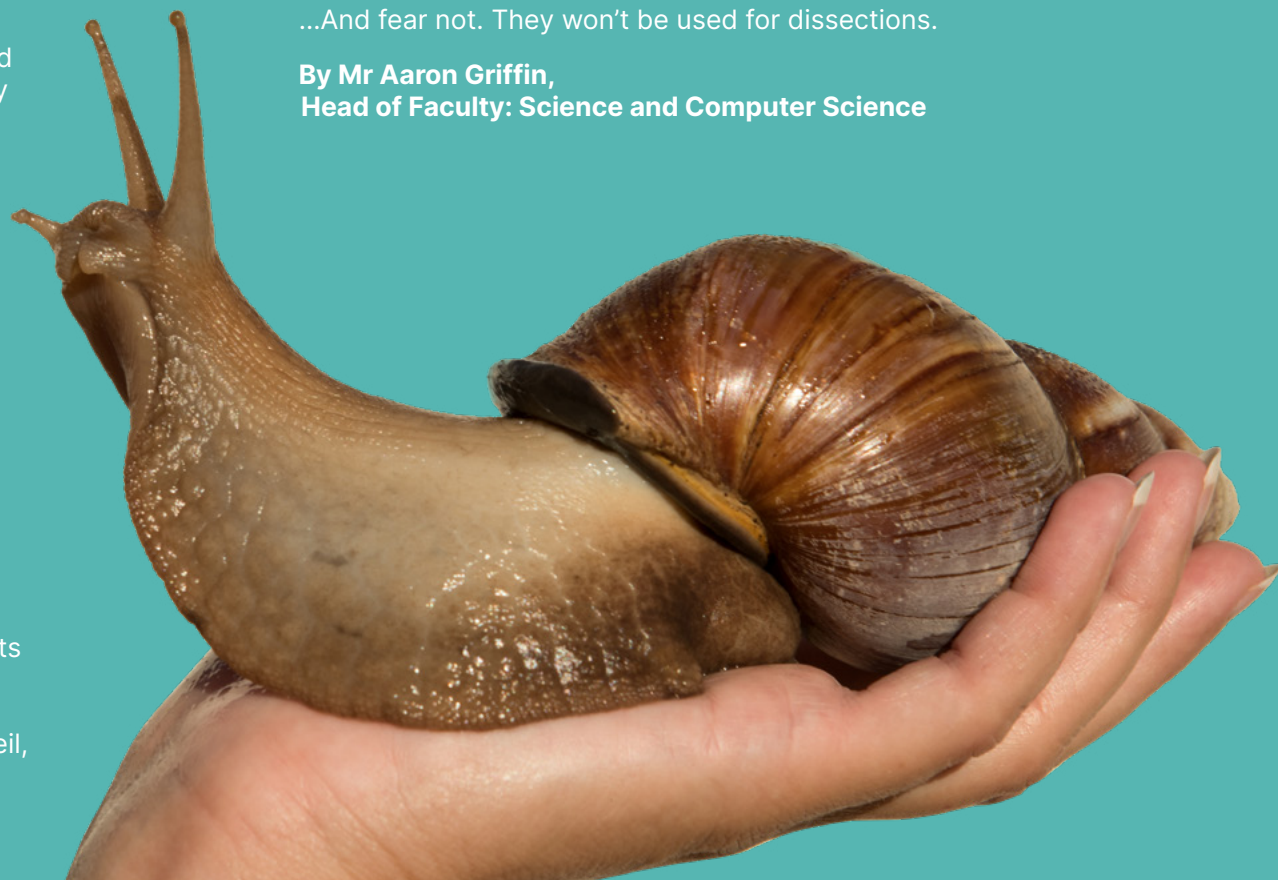
With this in mind, we are keen to allow all organisms to be studied and already have a plethora of plant species to study when the time comes. But invertebrates make up far more of the world's animal community than vertebrates, and so we must ensure that they are equally represented in our biological studies.

With this, comes the announcement of Neil, Buzz and Michael, our three Houlton Giant African Land Snails. Named after the three pioneering astronauts aboard the Apollo 11 mission in 1969. These snails will grow to around 8 inches long and can be used when talking about invertebrates and molluscs. Neil,

Buzz and Michael are only small currently, but are doing well in their permanently damp enclosure in the science prep room and will grow to become much loved members of the ever-growing Houlton family.

...And fear not. They won't be used for dissections.

**By Mr Aaron Griffin,
Head of Faculty: Science and Computer Science**



Computer Science

What are the age limits on social media?

What is cyberbullying?

How can we spot fake news?

Just what is your digital footprint and how can it effect your job prospects?

This term, Houlton computer scientists have started to look further into these questions by developing their understanding of why WhatsApp has an age limit of 16 but other social media sites might be lower, as well as learning what constitutes cyberbullying and how news can be created for profit or to influence the voting in a political system.

They have also developed an understanding of their digital footprint including how it is created and the negative effects it can have in the future if they are not aware and careful of what they are posting online.

Both Year 7 and Year 8 have done exceptionally well showing good prior

knowledge and a willingness to understand the ever-growing online world around them. As seen in our photo with Year 7, all years learned about Abbie's story, and how her accepting a party invitation lead to someone she considered a friend to start bullying her online and the fallout from this.

Next term we will be delving into the physical aspects of the computer and how computer systems are developed and created, a topic to be thoroughly looked forward to in the New Year!

**Mr Matthew Cresswell-Peters,
Subject Team Leader: Computer Science**

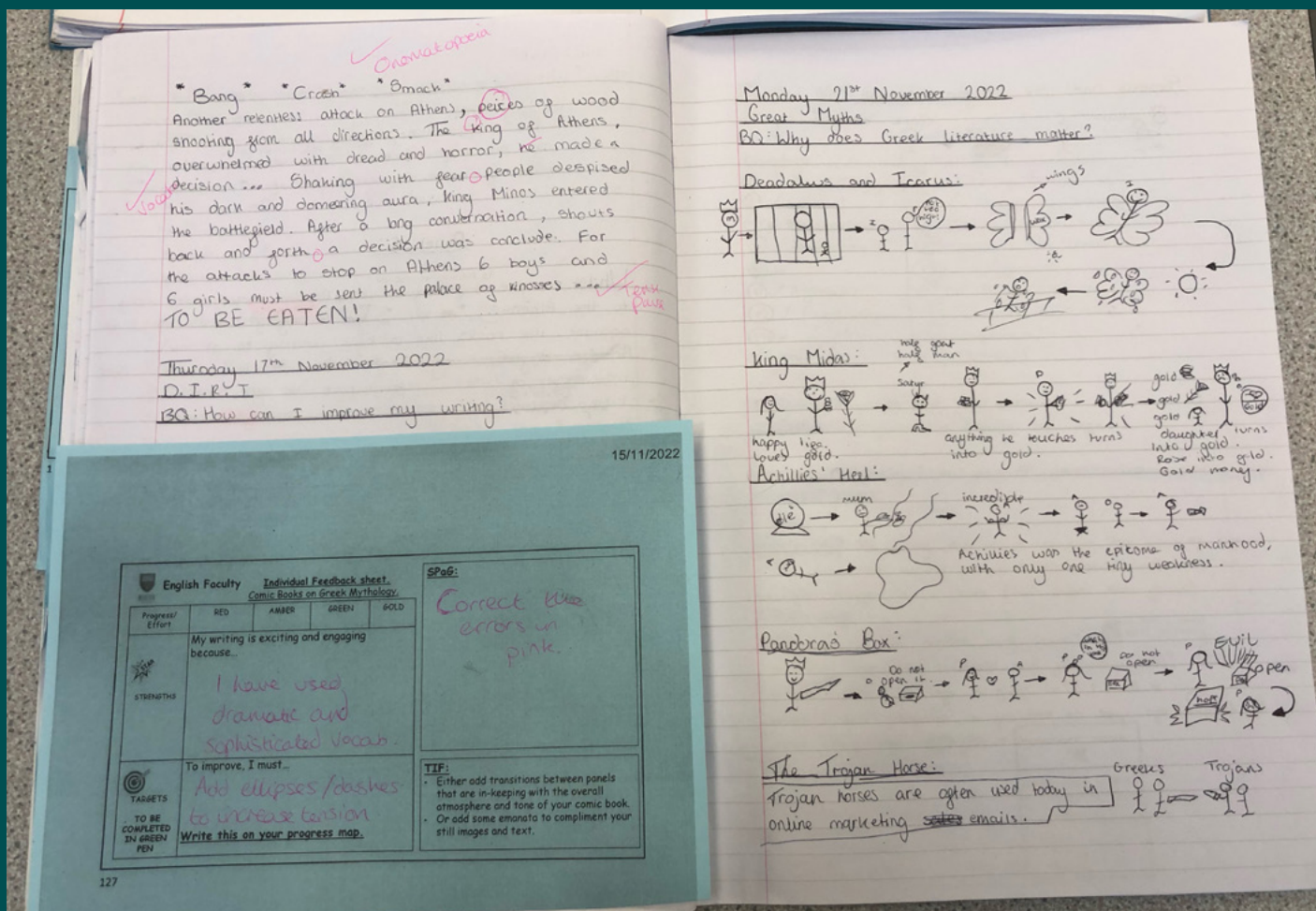
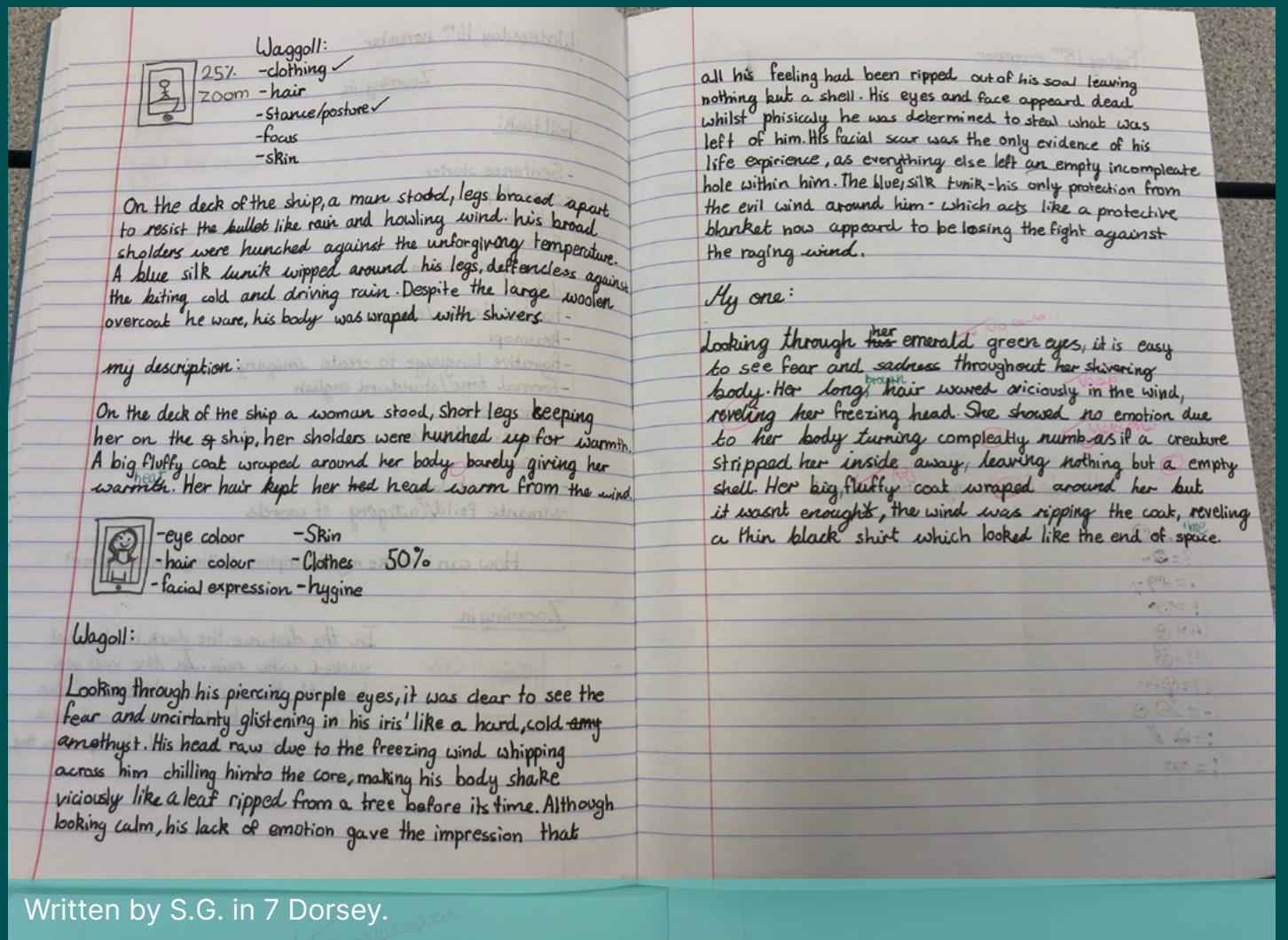


English and Literacy News

Andy Warhol once said: "You need to let the little things that would ordinarily bore you suddenly thrill you."

In recent weeks, Year 7 and 8 have been developing their creative writing skills, inspired by the texts that they have recently read.

Following their reading of 'Boy 87', Year 7 have been creating characters who have been forced to flee their homes. They have been focusing on the new vocabulary 'immerse', and attempting to create descriptive writing that successfully immerses and engages the reader. Through this, they have improved their whole text cohesion by making structural decisions, such as zooming in on small detail.



To extend their cultural capital in the wake of reading 'The Odyssey', Year 8 have been creating comic books based upon Ancient Greek mythology. Through this process, they have built upon their understanding of how to create tone and tension and have improved their whole text cohesion by making structural decisions, such as flashback and in media res. They have learned the new vocabulary 'parody' and have attempted to develop a dramatic, epic style within their own writing.

Both year groups are now moving on to develop their analytical skills. We are very much looking forward to seeing their wonderful work continue.

By Mrs Sian Warde,
 Head of Faculty: English,
 Literacy and Acting

Written by B.D., S.D., N.C. and G.C. in 8 Armstrong.

Geography

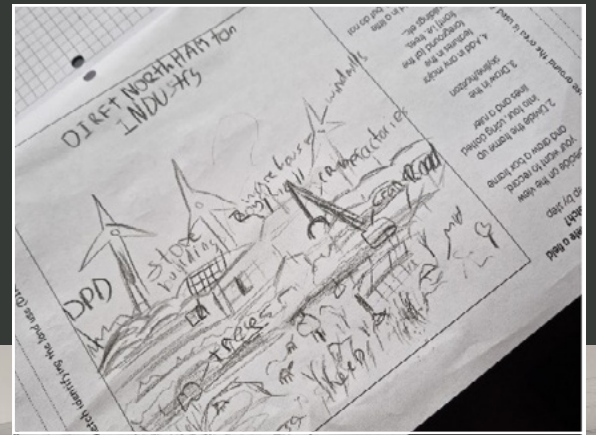
This term has been especially exciting in the Geography department. From the 6th to 18th November COP27 took place in Egypt and students engaged with COP27 events in a multitude of subjects including History, Art, English, Science and Maths. 7 Winton also took part in their own assembly which they presented to Year 7 and 8 to help raise awareness of COP27 and climate change impacts.

Year 7 students have recently been investigating the Big Question "Is Rugby an

appealing place to live?", this topic focuses on geographical fieldwork such as sketching the land use in and around Houlton. They've even been up to the Sixth Form common room for a better view!

Recently Year 8 students have been focusing on their oracy skills. Exploring what makes a great orator/presenter. As part of their end of topic assessment looking at the big question "threats to the biosphere" students presented their own findings on threats to a biome of their choice to the class.

**By Mr Chris Youmans,
Subject Leader: Geography**



History

As part of their wider studies into the Silk Roads, Year 7 students have been exploring the use of the astrolabe to find the direction of Mecca from the MUGA.

Using the ancient instrument, known as the 9th century mobile phone, Mr Abbot showed pupils how they could find their position on earth using the sun and then used this to develop their directional understanding. This helped to embed the importance of the instrument in allowing people to travel from China to Baghdad over 1000 years ago.

Year 8 have been exploring the importance of Tudor portraits in showcasing a monarch's power. They dissected the rainbow portrait of Elizabeth, highlighting different parts of her dress and the imagery surrounding her to explain how it made her look powerful. They also explored the importance of portraits further afield, taking into consideration Akbar the Great of the Mughal Empire. Both portraits are shown below: can you work out how they show the 16th century leaders as powerful? Why not ask a Year 8 pupil to see if you're correct!



Religious Studies

As part of their introduction to religion, Year 7 have been exploring how and why people believe in God. This has exposed Year 7 to a wide variety of different religious ideas and practices, covering ancient beliefs and modern-day religions.

During lessons on different types of worship, Mr Creswell-Peters explored the Buddhist practice of meditation, leading groups in the ancient practice and bringing a sense of serenity to the RE department!

**By Mr Jamie Abbott, Head of Faculty:
Humanities (History and Religious Studies)**



Big Question: Should We Sleep in the Dark?

It's a question that many new parents or well-being practitioners may ask themselves? How does light affect our sleep patterns and mental health?

Artists and interior architects have long understood that colours can affect our feelings, emotions and mood. This is why the rooms in a hospital are often green – green

calms and reduces stress. Other colours such as red, orange, yellow, blue, etc., have a different effect on the body

Researchers from Brigham and Women's Hospital have found that exposure to blue light can improve alertness and overcome fatigue.

Year 8 pupils have been navigating the data and the questions that arise from such research, delving into a world where science meets design in order to design and manufacture a product that suits the needs of a real-world client.

Research

Research: Client Interview

Who is your client for your 'Night Light'?

Oliver

How old is your client?

5

What theme would your client like to see on their 'Night Light'? (e.g. Football team, company, animals?)

Oliver's interest is animals and his favourite football team is Liverpool.

What colours (including light) would your client like the 'Night Light' to be?

My client would like the night light to be red as that is his favourite colour.

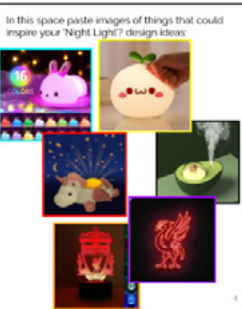
Where would your client like to use their 'Night Light'? (e.g. bedroom, car, living room, nursery?)

My client would most likely use their night light in the bedroom as that is where young children sleep.

How much would your client spend on a 'Night Light'?

Due to prices being risen in shops and other places, the cost of living has increased meaning we should sell the product at a reasonable price like £10-15.

In this space paste images of things that could inspire your 'Night Light' design ideas:



The Clients:

Meet Oliver

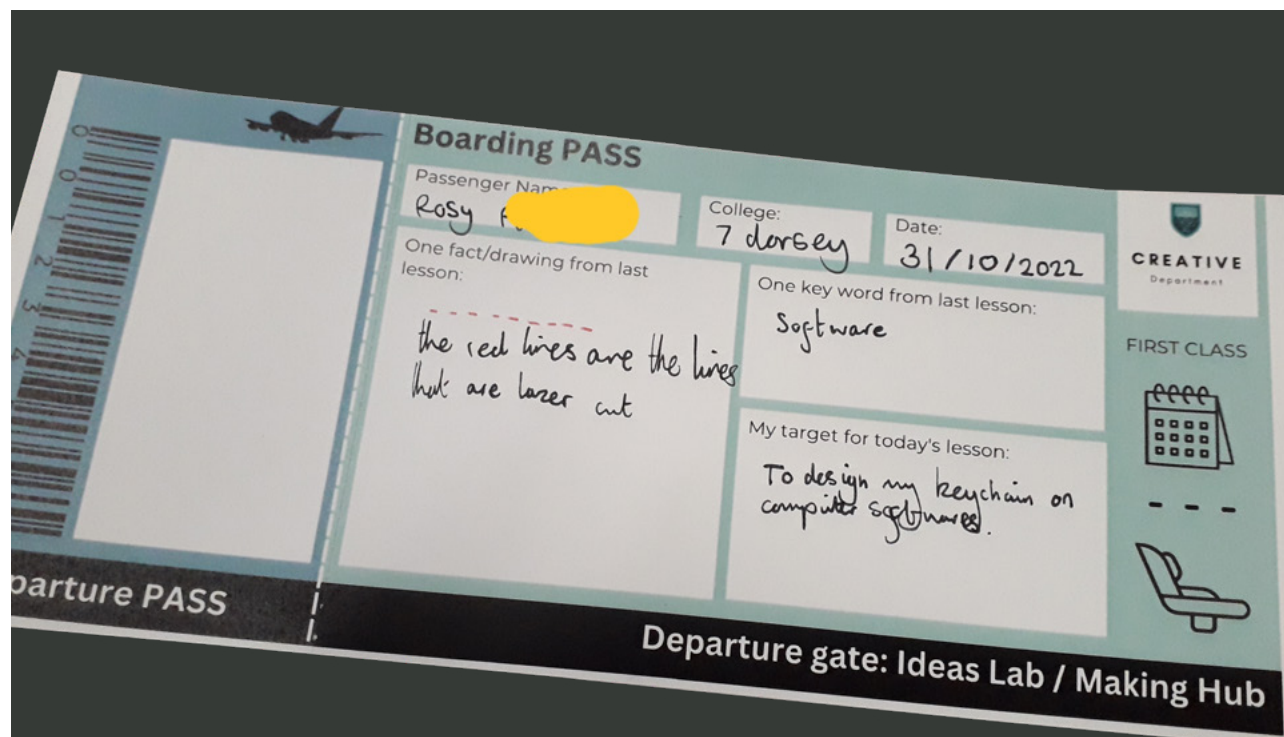
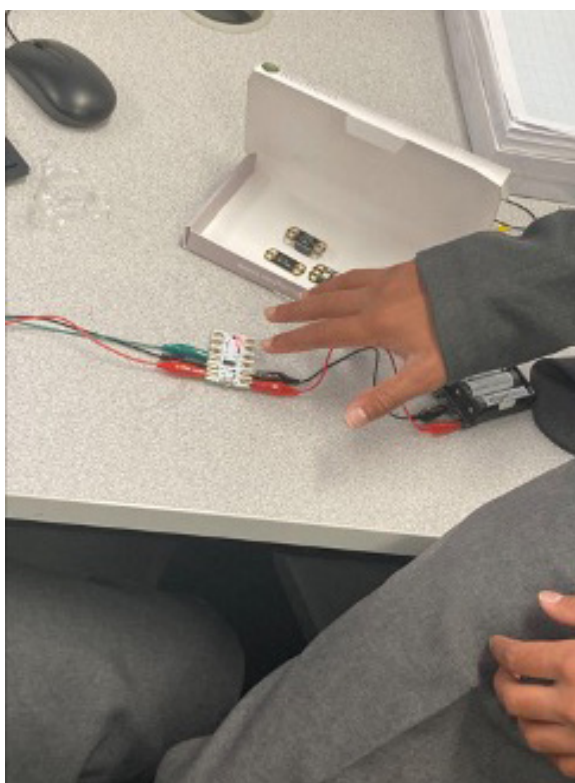
Oliver struggles to sleep at night in the dark. He is passionate about animals and his favourite colour is red, as he supports Liverpool. His parents are keen for him to use a night light to see if this will comfort him.

Meet Oliver's parent

Michelle is concerned that Oliver, who is 5 years old, finds the dark scary. She says, "Oliver needs a nightlight to make him more comfortable at nighttime."

Programming Electronics

Our expert designers used primary and secondary research to identify the needs and wants of their client and began programming electronics based on this knowledge. Using block programming and industry standard components, pupils were able to code specific colours, timers, sensors and switches that would form part of their designs.



Houlton Airways

Embedding Responsive/Adaptive Teaching

"...being responsive to information about learning, then adjusting teaching to better match pupil need." - John Eaton, Director of Kingsbridge Research School and Research Lead at Kingsbridge Community College, EEF.

How do we stay accountable to what our pupils know, have understood, or misconceived?

It is critical that all creative learners can self-regulate their learning, becoming independent learners and improving their metacognition.

As always, we aim to be the champions of creative practice, we are thrilled to announce 'Houlton Airways', a new initiative across the Creative Department.

Upon entering (boarding) the lesson pupils are tasked with recording previous learning on a boarding pass. Throughout each lesson, all pupils listen intently in anticipation of completing their departure pass; a tear-away ticket detailing an answer to a key knowledge-based question which is handed to the teacher when pupils leave (depart) the lesson.

By Mr Russell Hill, Subject Team Leader: Creative

Learning for our digital world

A principal figure of British conceptual art, Michael Craig-Martin probes the relationship between objects and images, harnessing the human capacity to imagine absent forms through symbols and pictures. Exploring the Big Question: How Still is Life? Year 8 artists have burrowed into the historical significance of the still life genre, albeit from a contemporary perspective.

The perceptual tension between object, representation, and language has been a central concern over the past four decades. Michael Craig-Martin often incorporated ready-mades into sculpture and made knowing reference to American Minimalism. Pupils were able to build on pre-existing knowledge of the Pop Art movement to respond intelligently to the Big Question through a wide variety of media and processes.

Craig-Martin's elegant restraint and conceptual clarity is exemplified by *An Oak Tree* (1973), comprising a glass of water on a shelf and a text written by him asserting that the glass of water is, in fact, an oak tree.

This interest in semantics, the play between rhetoric and object, continues to be a core theme in his work. In the 1990s Craig-Martin made a decisive shift to painting and developed his hallmark style of precise, bold outlines demarcating flat planes of intensely vibrant

colors. Through exacting draftsmanship, he uses composition to explore spatial relationships by juxtaposing and layering color.

Houlton artists created personal responses through continuous experimentation, resulting in some strong outcomes.

"As a teacher, it gives me great pleasure to witness pupils dive into a challenge and I have been overcome with pride at the resilience of our artists."

We are dealing with some complex art theory and although challenging at times, every pupil has shown maturity when tackling subject matter far beyond their years. Through teaching explicit painting techniques, pupils were able to intelligently intervene and question the significance of traditional still life painting and its relationship to contemporary discourse.

Building on their knowledge of painting, after Christmas, Year 8 will attack the Big Question: How Emotive Are Landscapes? We've shared some photos of our exciting works in progress, and of our pupils in action.

By Mr Russell Hill, Subject Team Leader: Creative

Music Department News

School of Rock

Exciting news this month as we held auditions for and cast for next year's performance of *The School of Rock Musical*.

A huge turnout of extremely talented pupils attended and it was very difficult for the panel to cast the show due to the high levels of performance during the auditions. Congratulations to all those who attended. We were able to cast two different sets of Leads in the end who will each do two shows each! We can't wait to get started!

Houlton School Radio

Houlton School Radio will launch January 2023 with a bang so watch this space! We have been preparing some amazing material to share!

Music Lessons

Music Lesson payments and administration are moving over to Warwickshire Music Service from January. You can now sign up for lessons directly through the Warwickshire Music Service website.

We will be welcoming two new tutors to the team in January to deliver Guitar, Drums, Piano and Brass. It's a very exciting time as we expand rapidly.

Those currently waiting to start lessons will start in January 2023.

Twitter

Houlton Music Department can now be found on Twitter @houltonmusic Follow us to keep up to date with all things Music!

Carols By Candlelight

Join the Houlton School Choir for Christmas Carols under the water tower at 6pm on the 14th of December. Tickets available through Parent Pay or on the door.

By Mr James Hunter, Subject Team Leader: Music



Modern Languages

Spanish

Year 8 pupils this term have been working on the Big Question: Is school the best place to learn?

We looked at an article from Explore to start our reflection on where could we find learning opportunities? This led us to discover the Mexican School system, and the differences between UK and Mexican schools. At Houlton, we went outside to learn how to tell the time and played a game of '¿Qué hora es, señor Lobo?'

¡Pintamos como Picasso! might say our Year 7 pupils, who had a closer look at Spanish painter Picasso.

We looked at Picasso's influence of cubism when making his self-portraits, and we drew our own, Picasso-style self-portraits!



French

Year 8 pupils have been working on 'What would be my dream holiday?'. We answered a questionnaire to find out more about the style of holiday we are dreaming of, which led to an introspection: what does my dream get away say about me? We also focused on real-life scenario: J'ai perdu ma valise! (I have lost my suitcase!) and practised during a role-play the art of asking for information at a lost and found desk in France.

Year 7s, to commemorate Remembrance Day, looked at the way France remembers those who have fallen during WW1. Our pupils were profoundly interested in learning about the French commemorations of 11th of November, and the differences between the traditional red poppy, and its French equivalent, the blue cornflower.

As a school, we created an acrostic poem, using French keywords chosen by each college.

"Not only did the pupils show respect and interest in the differences between the French and the British commemorations, but they also made me feel at home, as we were all able to take a moment on 11th November to remember those who have fallen for their countries, abroad or at home."

#HoultonFamily

By Mr Matthieu Raffy, Subject Team Leader: Modern Languages

Movember

In addition to our staff body raising money and awareness for Men's Health Charities this November, our wonderful Houlton pupils have joined in with the Movember campaign. Many pupils donated their time and baking efforts to making and selling moustache-themed cakes and biscuits.

Houlton pupils further showed their kindness and generosity by buying these brilliant bakes. As a result, they managed to raise £140.33 for charity. They also got to eat some of the delicious moustaches below:

A special mention goes to Rhys J in 7 Dorsey who raised a further £35, bringing the total figure to a fantastic £175.33.

For more information about Movember and how you can get involved, visit their website: uk.movember.com

By Mr Jamie Abbott, Mr Matthieu Raffy and Mrs Sian Warde



Restart a Heart Day

This event takes place on and around 16 October each year.

This is a world-wide event to help raise awareness of cardiac arrest and teach CPR.

Why is it important?

Approximately 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests happen every year in the UK. Sadly, less than 1 in 10 people survive these cardiac arrests. Performing CPR can more than double the chances of survival in some cases.

Every year 7 college received CPR training during the Autumn term, and will soon be learning about defibrillators, where they are located and how to use them.

Year 8 will be revisiting their CPR knowledge from last year's Restart A Heart Day and will also be learning about defibrillators.

Learning how to save a life is our new superpower!

**By Miss Annie Divver,
Year 8 Pupil Experience: Mental Health and First Aid Leader**

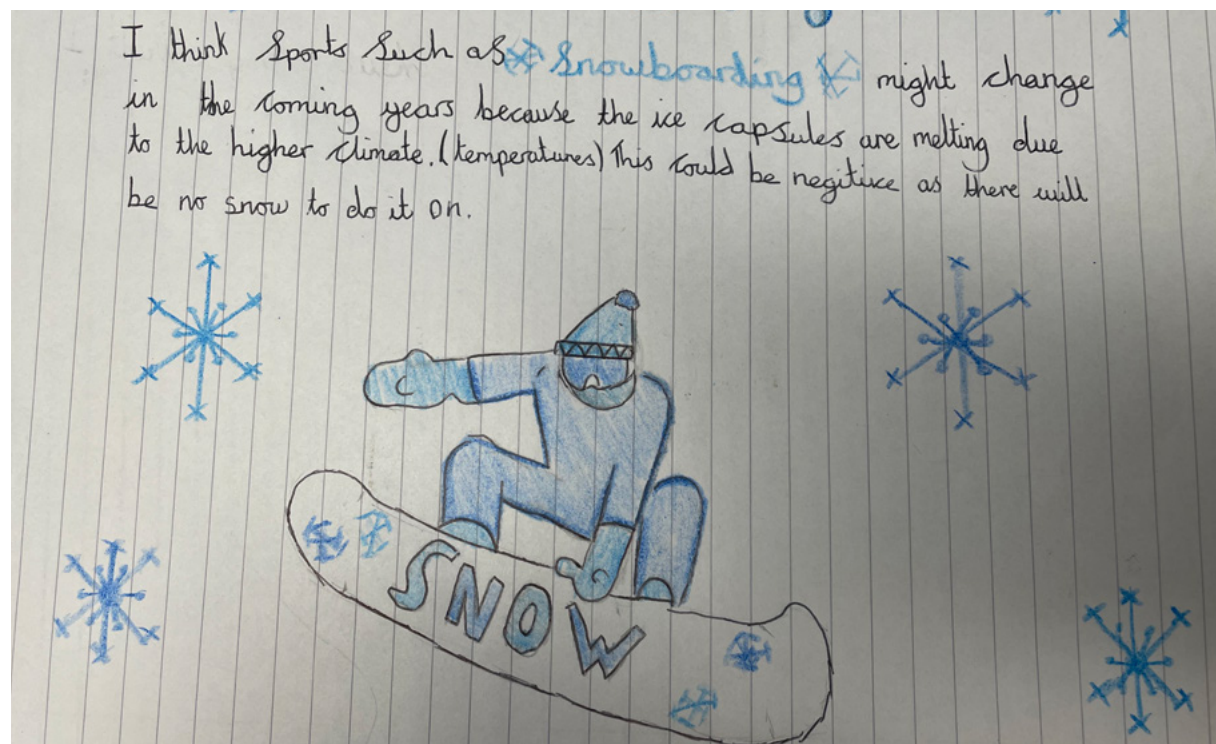


PE at Houlton

COP27 PE Homework

Well done to all the pupils who submitted entries for the optional COP27 PE homework this term. It is important to understand how sport is impacting our environment and what sport clubs are doing to combat this. Below are some excellent examples of the work produced.

By Miss Abbie Hartfield, Subject Team Leader: Physical Education




Other fixtures that have taken place this half term:

Year 7 and 8 Rugby Vs LSS

Year 8 Netball Vs Bilton

Year 8 Basketball Vs AVS

Year 7 & 8 Badminton against a variety of local schools

 @HoultonPEdept

Netball

Our netball matches were all different this term.

We won one and also lost the others however our skills and communication improved in each match. Also, throughout the matches we switched positions and saw which ones we were good at. Throughout these matches we were very supportive. We also got a player of the match from the other schools in most of the matches, which was the second (Ashlawn school) who was Maja in 8-Winton

and the third (Bilton school) who was Rhea in 8-Armstrong.

In our matches we felt like our best quarters were our second and fourth however we need to focus on our foot work and spreading out. Also, our strengths were mostly communication and passing out of all the 4 matches we played which were against Harris, Bilton, Ashlawn and Parker Academy. We played best in the fourth one which was against Bilton even though we didn't

win overall it was definitely the best match in which we incorporated good foot work, positioning, passing and communication.

Well done to the Houlton school netball team which includes Rhea (8A), Maja (8W), Isla (8W), Tillie (8D), Georgia (8D), Olivia (8A), Hannah (8D), Lauren (8O), Orlaith (8D), Megan (8A), Elisa (8S), Charlotte (8S).

Written by Tillie (8D)

PE Reminders for Pupils and Parents/Carers:

If your child is excused from PE due to an injury/medical reason, a handwritten note from home needs to be handed in to the PE teacher at the start of the lesson.

If your child cannot participate practically, we still expect them to bring in their PE kit and get changed. Only under exceptional circumstances where they physically cannot get changed, will we allow pupils to remain in their uniform.

Pupils need to have their Green Houlton socks for every PE lesson.

Please follow our twitter page with all news regarding fixtures, results and PE department news @HoultonPEdept.

Our PE department are looking out for the following qualities for win our Pupil of the term award:

- Gone above and beyond to help in PE/ Dance lessons
- Demonstrated exceptional effort and enthusiasm consistently across the term
- Taking an active part in our co-curricular clubs and teams
- Positive attitude and a willingness to learn
- Polite, punctual, reliable and organised pupil

The pupil who wins this award will receive an R2 and a piece of sporting equipment!

By Miss Abbie Hartfield, Subject Team Leader: Physical Education



HOULTON
SCHOOL

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