EYFS · RECEPTION–Y1

Understanding the World

EYFS Knowledge Organiser

Three sub-areas

1

Past and present

Children develop curiosity about their own history and the history of the world. Begin to understand the concepts of before and after, change over time, and living memory.

Example: By ELG: talks about the lives of people around them and their roles; knows some similarities and differences between things in the past and now

2

People, culture and communities

Children learn about similarities and differences between people, cultures, faiths, and communities — beginning with family, then school, then the wider world.

Example: By ELG: describes their immediate environment; explains some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities

3

The natural world

Children develop scientific curiosity — observing, questioning, and exploring plants, animals, materials, and natural phenomena.

Example: By ELG: explores the natural world, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants; describes what they see, hear, and feel outside

nderstanding of the world

Practical approaches for EYFS

- REGULAR OUTDOOR TIME: direct experience of the natural world is irreplaceable. Observe seasons change. Watch minibeasts. Feel different weather.

- REAL OBJECTS AND ARTEFACTS: a family photograph, an old object, a map — concrete objects make abstract concepts (past, distance, difference) accessible
- VISITORS AND COMMUNITY LINKS: family members with different occupations, community helpers, people of different cultural backgrounds — human connections to learning
- BOOKS FROM MANY CULTURES: stories from different settings, traditions, and families normalise diversity without making it exotic
- COOKING: connects to many cultures, involves science (transformation), maths (measuring), and language (describing taste and texture)
- WONDERING ALOUD: 'I wonder why the leaves change colour. What do you think?' Models inquiry and invites children into scientific thinking