

# YEAR 4 CYCLE A CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

A broad and balanced curriculum that builds knowledge, sparks curiosity and helps every child to flourish.

EXPLORE  
DISCOVER  
BELONG  
FLOURISH



## HISTORY-LED INVASION

### BIG QUESTION

**Who shaped Britain after the Romans?**

We'll explore the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, why they came to Britain, how they lived and the lasting impact they had on our country.



## GEOGRAPHY-LED MISTY MOUNTAIN, WINDING RIVER

### BIG QUESTION

**How do rivers and mountains shape our world?**

We'll use maps and atlases to explore rivers, mountains and landscapes, and find out how they shape places, people and the environment.



## HISTORY-LED ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS

### BIG QUESTION

**What makes a civilisation?**

We'll explore ancient civilisations, including Ancient Egypt, and learn about their beliefs, achievements, daily life and the legacy they left behind.



## WHAT PARENTS WILL SEE IN THIS OVERVIEW

Each topic page shows the key learning, memorable experiences, suggested texts and practical challenges from the Year 4 Cycle A class plan. Alongside these themed units, Year 4 continues the school's wider programmes in mathematics, PE, music, French and PSHE.

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COURAGE • COMPASSION • COMMUNITY

Where every child belongs, grows and flourishes.

Brighter  
Futures  
Together





# HISTORY-LED TOPIC INVASION

From Roman withdrawal to Anglo-Saxon and Viking Britain - with rich links across geography, science, creativity and computing.



## HISTORY

Follow Britain from the Roman withdrawal through Anglo-Saxon and Viking settlement to the Norman invasion. Explore key events, kingdoms, beliefs and everyday life. Compare sources, build timelines, consider different perspectives and explore the legacy of invasion in Britain today.



## SCIENCE

Investigate food chains and how living things depend on each other in ecosystems. Explore human digestion and the role of teeth, including comparing human and animal teeth. Learn how sound is made, how it travels and how pitch, volume and distance can be changed through practical enquiries and fair tests.



## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Explore food preservation and packaging, including healthy eating and sustainable design. Investigate how food is kept fresh and design, make and evaluate a prototype for a healthy packaged snack, considering materials, functionality and appeal.



## COMPUTING

Build online safety awareness, learn how to be responsible digital citizens and evaluate digital content. Develop algorithms, create and debug programs, and use technology to present information and ideas effectively.



## GEOGRAPHY

Develop map skills using compass points, four- and six-figure grid references and scale. Explore the physical and human features of the UK, North and South America. Investigate rivers and mountains, climate, natural resources, settlements, energy and transport networks, and develop fieldwork and data-handling skills.



## ART

Develop colour theory using tertiary, warm and cool colours and explore how colours can create mood and atmosphere. Investigate yarns, fibres and weaving through the Warp and Weft project, designing and making a woven piece inspired by Anglo-Saxon and Viking textiles and patterns.



## ENGLISH

Read and write a range of texts including Anglo-Saxon poetry, playscripts, Norse myths and non-chronological reports. Develop key skills in reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation, and create engaging writing for different purposes and audiences.



## RE

Explore Janmashtami through the story of Krishna, including key beliefs and celebrations. Learn about Kathina and the life of Buddhist monks, considering what these traditions teach about generosity, community and the way people live.

## MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

Visit a local ruin or historic site to explore the remains of the past. Try Viking-style food and keep it fresh, experience textiles through time, and reflect on identity, change and generosity.

## SUGGESTED TEXTS

The Saga of Erik the Viking – Terry Jones;  
Collins Primary Atlas; Anglo-Saxon Boy –  
Tony Bradman; Beowulf (child-friendly retelling);  
Viking Voyagers – Jack Tite.

## INNOVATE CHALLENGES

Create a Viking-inspired board game, investigate digestion and sound, design healthy food packaging and make a woven wall hanging inspired by Anglo-Saxon or Viking patterns.

## ASK ME ABOUT

How Britain changed after the Romans. Why Vikings came to Britain. What everyday life was like for Anglo-Saxons and Vikings. How rivers, mountains and sound work. What we can learn from different beliefs, traditions and the people who lived through these changes.

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## GEOGRAPHY-LED TOPIC

# MISTY MOUNTAIN, WINDING RIVER

Explore rivers, mountains and changing environments while developing geographical enquiry, science, art and design skills.

RIVERS  
MOUNTAINS  
PEOPLE  
PLACES



### GEOGRAPHY

Explore rivers and mountains through maps, atlases, grid references and contour lines. Learn about erosion, transportation and deposition, and how rivers shape landscapes. Compare mountain environments in the UK and around the world, study climate and vegetation, and use data to complete fieldwork-style analysis.



### SCIENCE

Investigate solids, liquids and gases and how materials change state. Measure and record temperature, explore the water cycle and relate it to rivers and precipitation. Learn about particle theory, make fair tests and present findings in graphs. Classify living things and explore how habitats can change over time, including in mountain and river environments.



### ART

Create landscapes with perspective, exploring motifs and patterns found in mountains and rivers. Learn about artists such as William Morris, investigate the significance of animals in art across cultures, and develop skills in drawing, printing, block printing and embroidery using natural forms and repeating patterns.



### DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Explore mountain-climbing equipment, fabrics and their properties. Investigate the work of William Morris, experiment with stitching and embellishment techniques, and plan, design and make a patterned textile inspired by the natural world, considering function, purpose and sustainability.



### ENGLISH

Write diaries from the perspective of an explorer, produce information leaflets and explanations about rivers and mountains, and create narrative poetry inspired by landscapes and the natural world. Use geographical vocabulary and rich description to inform and engage the reader.



### RE

Explore Vaisakhi through the story of the Khalsa Sikhs, the importance of the Five Ks and what these symbols mean for identity and belonging. Learn about Holy Week and Easter, considering the promises within the Christian faith and how belief can give hope and strength in challenging times.

### MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

River study or local field visit; landscape viewpoint walk; map and compass activities; exploring natural materials and fabrics; animals in art.

### SUGGESTED TEXT

King of the Cloud Forests - Michael Morpurgo. (Links to themes of nature, protection and exploration.)

### INNOVATE CHALLENGES

Learn about the Lakes, investigate states of matter, create a landscape, design and make a William Morris-inspired fabric, classify living things and make a Bankura horse sculpture using clay and pattern.

### ASK ME ABOUT

How rivers change from source to mouth. What contour lines show. How water changes state. How mountains and rivers affect people and the environment. What we can do to look after these special places.



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Discover  
Belong  
Flourish

Brighter  
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## HISTORY-LED TOPIC

# ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS

Use evidence, artefacts and practical design to explore the achievements and everyday lives of some of the world's earliest civilisations.



### HISTORY

Investigate the features of civilisations through Ancient Sumer, Ancient Egypt and the Indus Valley. Use artefacts, ancient sources and timelines to explore inventions, everyday life, hierarchy, leaders and why civilisations ended, considering what lasting legacies they left for the modern world.



### DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Make switches using programmable technology and a micro:bit, then design and create a working nightlight for a chosen purpose. Explore simple and compound machines through the Tomb Builders project, thinking about how levers, pulleys and ramps could help Ancient Egyptians move and build heavy structures.



### GEOGRAPHY LINK

Connect the electrical topic to sustainable energy sources and consider how technology links to our wider world. Use maps and atlases to locate and compare the Ancient Sumer, Egyptian and Indus Valley civilisations, exploring how rivers, mountains and climate shaped where people lived, traded and built their societies.



### SCIENCE

Build and test simple electrical circuits, learning about sources of electricity, components (cells, wires, switches, bulbs, buzzers), conductivity and insulators. Apply scientific enquiry skills to predict, observe and explain how electricity may be developed and used in the future, including everyday and sustainable applications.



### ART

Study statues, statuettes and figurines from ancient civilisations, developing drawing, painting and clay sculpture skills. Explore Egyptian and Islamic motifs, pattern and relief, using observational drawing, texture and mixed media to create inspired artwork and respond to the style and meaning behind ancient designs.



### ENGLISH

Write free verse poetry, instructions and stories inspired by ancient civilisations, including myth and legend. Use non-fiction texts to find out information, then plan, draft and edit clear and engaging writing, using ambitious vocabulary, descriptive language and correct punctuation to bring history and art themes to life.

EXPLORE  
DISCOVER  
BELONG  
FLOURISH



### MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

Ask: What is a civilisation? Explore real and replica artefacts, handle objects, take part in figure drawing, simple machines and Islamic art workshops, and immerse in Ancient Egypt through stories, drama and creative activities.

### SUGGESTED TEXT

Secrets of a Sun King – Emma Carroll.

### INNOVATE CHALLENGES

Explore the Indus Valley, design a nightlight, make Sumer-style figurines, build with simple machines and create geometric tiles inspired by Islamic art.

### ASK ME ABOUT

What civilisations have in common. What artefacts can tell us. How rivers and landscapes influenced where people lived. How a switch controls a circuit. What we can still learn from ancient civilisations today.

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Futures  
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EXPLORE  
BELIEVE  
RESPECT  
LEARN  
TOGETHER

# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ACROSS CYCLE A

Six units invite children to explore beliefs and practices respectfully, while thinking deeply about identity, generosity, belief, rest, sacrifice and charity.

Different  
People  
Brighter  
World

KINDNESS  
BUILDS A  
BETTER  
TOMORROW

RESPECT  
UNDERSTAND  
BELONG  
FLOURISH



## JANMASHTAMI

Krishna; Janmashtami celebrations; role models.

We explore the story of Krishna's birth, how Janmashtami is celebrated and what Krishna's life teaches about courage, kindness and doing what is right.



### Big question:

Who inspires us and why?



## KATHINA

Buddhist monks; the Dalai Lama; generosity.

We learn about the Kathina tradition, why monks rely on the generosity of others, and how giving supports Buddhist communities. We also consider the example of the Dalai Lama and the value of compassion.



### Big question:

What does generosity look like?



## VAISAKHI

Khalsa Sikhs; promises; the Five Ks; identity.

We find out how Vaisakhi celebrates the birth of the Khalsa, the meaning of the Five Ks, and how Sikhs live out their faith through commitment, service and equality.



### Big question:

How do beliefs shape identity?



## HOLY WEEK & EASTER

Holy Week; Easter; belief.

We explore the key events of Holy Week, including Palm Sunday, the Last Supper, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, and what they mean for Christians today. We consider themes of sacrifice, hope, new life and love.



### Big question:

How can belief shape choices?



## SHABBAT

The seventh day; Shabbat customs; comparing special days; rest.

We learn about the importance of Shabbat, how Jewish families prepare and celebrate, and why rest, family time and reflection are special. We also compare Shabbat with other special days of rest.



### Big question:

Why is rest important?



## EID UL-ADHA

Pilgrimage; sacrifice; charity.

We explore the story of Ibrahim's willingness to follow God, how Eid ul-Adha is celebrated, and the importance of sacrifice, gratitude and giving to those in need.



### Big question:

What can sacrifice and charity mean?

## LITERACY & LEARNING ACROSS THE YEAR

**Writing genres:** Anglo-Saxon poetry, playscripts, Norse myths, non-chronological reports, diaries, information leaflets, explanations, narrative poetry, free verse, instructions and stories from other cultures.

**Learning by doing:** river fieldwork, food and sound investigations, weaving and textile design, clay sculpture, electrical circuits, programming and practical design challenges.

**Linked across the curriculum:** making thoughtful connections between our learning in RE, English, history, geography, art, design & technology, music, PE, and PSHE.

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EXPLORE  
DISCUSS  
READ  
CREATE  
CONNECT

Big ideas  
Brighter futures

CURIOSITY  
COMPASSION  
COMMUNITY