



BCA Newsletter

N° 19 / April 1st 2022



“UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD”

Understanding the World

A core BCA value is “to be a global citizen who contributes”, and our definition of high quality learning, developed earlier this year, states that it “promotes intercultural understanding”. This Newsletter brings you updates and an insight into recent student learning experiences that align with these objectives.

Global citizenship and intercultural understanding build from, and develop, affective skills such as empathy, acceptance and generosity. Equally important is the cognitive domain: students must, through the school curriculum, acquire the knowledge and understanding that provide a framework for meaningful action. They need to be well informed.

The use of historical arguments to justify acts of war is nothing new, but given current events, we once more realise the essential task of educators in providing the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable students to keep an open mind, form their own opinions and exercise their rights and responsibilities as citizens.



For our youngest students, the UK Early Years Foundation Framework we follow at BCA has ‘Understanding the World’ as a specific area of learning, with goals related to three sub-areas:

- Past and Present
- People, Culture and Communities
- The Natural World

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER



By the time they reach Year 1, for example, our students might be expected to talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society; to know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now; to understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.



In the English Key Stage 1 (Year 1) curriculum, and onwards right through Primary and Secondary, 'Understanding the World' is reconfigured into:

- Geography
- History
- Science

Geography and History are compulsory until the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9), and most students will continue beyond with one. Business and Economics also appear at the IGCSE or IBDP level. Science is compulsory throughout.

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

Understanding the World is all very well as a grand aim, but the world is a very big place with a very long history, a diverse geography, and a complex and ever-evolving body of scientific knowledge. Which part of the world? Which aspect? Which era? Whose perspective? Where to begin and in what order? The English National Curriculum provides structure, content and guidance but the team of teachers, as the professionals in the classroom, decide priorities and develop their own 'scheme of work' or 'unit plans'.



Charles the Great or Erik the Red?

Here is a small but significant example of the decisions that must be taken in building a meaningful programme of study. One part of the English National Curriculum for History in Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) states that "Pupils should be taught about the Viking and Anglo-Saxon struggle for the Kingdom of England". Stories of marauding Vikings certainly make for exciting and interesting lessons, but is this relevant if you don't happen to live in Britain or Scandinavia? As the Vikings were venturing forth, further south in mainland Europe, Charlemagne was building an empire, with key events such as his crossing of the Pyrenees, invasion of Al-Andalus, the establishment of the Marca Hispanica and the recovery in the Year 803 of present-day Andorra from the Moors.

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER



Viking helmet, Norway.



Charlemagne's Throne, Aachen, Germany.

Both images: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

The teacher will ask: for students in Andorra, is the battle between the kingdoms of the Moors and of Charlemagne more important to know about than the battle for the kingdom of England? Same time; different place. Every curriculum is just the “edited highlights” of human experience, and no curriculum can ever be comprehensive. The job of the teacher is to provide a framework by which students can make links and continue to build their understanding of the world, long after they have left school. A school’s curriculum might include at various times a study of both the Vikings and the Empire of *El gran Carlemany*, and place them on a common timeline (History) or map (Geography) which would enable students to understand the overall situation in Europe at the end of the First Century. A skilled teacher might also draw out the common ideas of the development of civilisation, territorial expansion, conquest, the growth and decline of empires, and see how that might be applied to other times and places in history. You will read below some of the strategies our teachers have been using in the last couple of weeks.

U Lock

Mr Harry Lock
Principal



Taking Action: Green Schools

The Green School team is working on improving BCA's environment by becoming more environmentally conscious. This is part of Andorra Sostenible's [Escoles Verdes](#) scheme.

We started by analysing the school's current environmental impact. This was then followed by setting up an initial action plan of actions which would have an immediate impact. We began by collecting litter around the school grounds. We continued by placing more recycling bins and signs for everyone to recycle waste in the correct bins. The team has also created a checklist of reminders for staff and pupils to follow if they are the last person to leave a room to encourage less energy use. Further initiatives that are in the development stages are a school garden, ways to encourage wildlife and ideas to use less packaging.

We will also be seeking opportunities to improve the environment in the wider community including our own homes. After all this success, the team will meet with other Green schools of Andorra- to make the country a better place.

Eliot Lopez Abraham (Y7) and Mr Holmes



UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

- Here are some recent examples of recycling activities from Penguins and planting in Cygnets class.



Taking Action: Ukraine Crisis

A really big thank you to all parents and students who donated school supplies in our recent appeal. We have made two substantial deliveries to the Creu Roja in Andorra, and these formed part of the consignments that will reach Ukrainian children in need, supporting their education.



Please see a news item below for the UNICEF action that we are supporting in conjunction with our parent representatives.

UNICEF Book Collection, 4-8 April

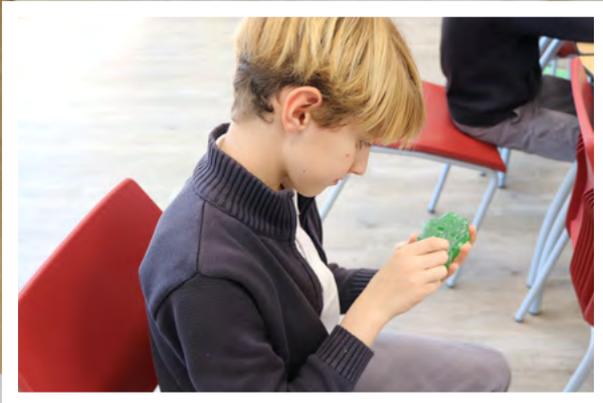
Please bring your used, saleable books to school this week. In conjunction with [UNICEF](#) and the parent representatives, we are supporting a book collection in the coming week. The books will then be sold at the [Sant Jordi's Day Festival](#) on 23rd April, the 'Fira del llibre i la rosa'. St. Jordi is also known as St. George, the patron saint of several nations, including England. He lived about 500 years before Charlemagne.

Let's do all we can to continue to support Ukrainian children and their future! Please see the poster on the end page of this Newsletter.

Year 6

Next week, Hawks class will be 'travelling' to ancient Mexico and Central America as they build an interactive 'Maya Museum'. This aligns with the English National Curriculum which requires study of a non-European society. Given the links with Spain, the Mayan civilization makes a good choice. Class parents are invited to attend on Thursday 7th April, and a separate message will be sent.





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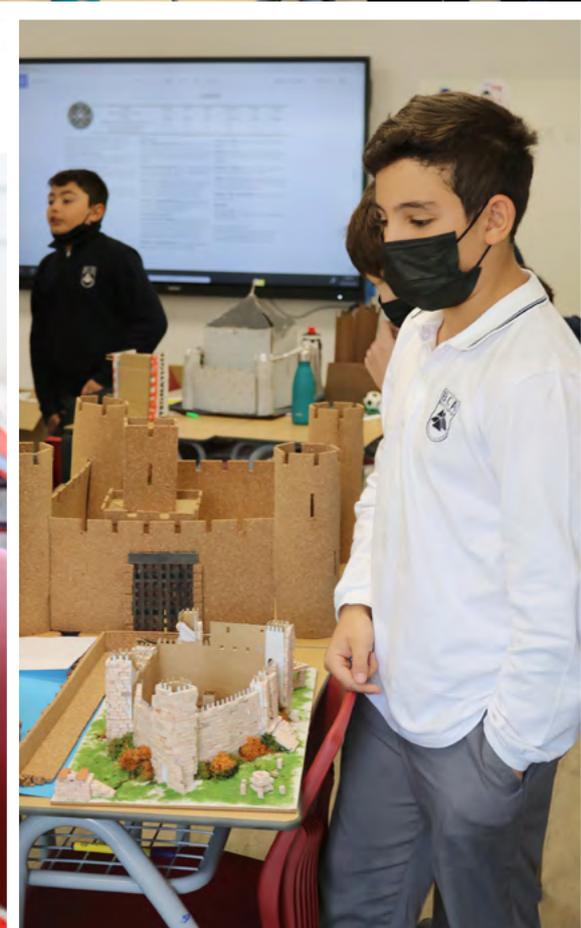
Year 7

Castles

Students in Condors have been working hard this term to put their knowledge of castles to the test. Working individually or in pairs students had to design a castle with a limited budget to purchase different features. They took into consideration the location, means of defence and attack, and other features such as chapels and escape tunnels to create the best mediaeval fortress they could. Students then took their castles into battle against each other in a game designed by Mr. Brown to see which would win, should the two different forces they had created need to face off against one another in a duel. Everyone had a very enjoyable time and it was great to see students evaluate the different features of a castle to create one that was truly creative and unique. To take the learning even further, we will consider a field trip next year to one of the superb Cathar castles just north of Andorra, in Ariège.



UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD



Year 8

Life on a Slave Plantation

Students in Falcons engaged in a jigsaw group work exercise to evaluate the different features of life upon a slave plantation, comparing what they discovered with the two opposing views of official historians on the subject. They then shared their findings with the rest of the class and decided which historian they most agreed with. They did this by writing an extended paragraph highlighting the five key pieces of evidence that informed their decision.



Year 9

Life in Nazi Germany - Propaganda

Students in Ospreys are working to analyse the different propaganda techniques used by the Nazis before and after 1933.

Students had to consider the key features of each poster, why they stood out, who the poster was targeting and why it might have been effective. Importantly, they compared their understanding of propaganda in the past (both British and German) to how governments use it in the present to support their election campaigns, promote policy and try to shape society's understanding of the world.

In the age of misinformation rapidly spread through social media, this kind of learning experience is invaluable.



Updated Hygiene Protocol

With the Govern's significant announcement this week, no members of the BCA community need wear a mask on campus. We must respect the preferences of some (students, staff, parents) who may choose to continue to wear a mask in some settings, and that they may reasonably request others to do so, in a meeting for example. Best to have that conversation, if there is doubt, rather than assuming consent.

Regular hand washing/disinfection and ensuring that rooms are well and frequently ventilated remain good hygiene practices in any circumstances, and we will continue to reinforce this.

The limitation linked to cohabitation units has also been lifted, and this opens up many possibilities for learning activities across year groups and assemblies. We have waited for this moment for a long time!

New Astro

We are very happy to announce the opening of our new astro pitch. It is already in use for classes and at break times. The staff gave it a rigorous testing in an after school football match (Primary vs Secondary) last week.



Parent readers in Early Years and Primary

We continue to value your support and believe that parents play a vital role in supporting and enriching the children's education. The purpose of these reading sessions are to give the children further opportunities to practise their reading and comprehension skills with an adult, as we have found that this can make a real difference to their progress and achievement. If you would like to volunteer, in the first instance, please contact your child's class teacher.

Year 9 IGCSE Information Evening

On Wednesday 27th April there will be a further IGCSE information evening, specifically for Year 9 (Ospreys) students and parents. It will be in the Dining Hall and will commence at 17:00, finishing at 18:30. The secondary teachers will be present to talk about their IGCSE courses. We will look at the optional subjects in more detail. There is no need to confirm attendance in advance.

Seesaw and Google Classroom

As you will know, we have recently opened parent access to Seesaw (in Primary) and Google Classroom (in Secondary), to further support student learning and the home-school partnership. We are pleased with the feedback we have had to this initiative. Please note that, going forward in Primary, Seesaw may be used to share class-specific news and information, rather than the traditional email. If you have any difficulties with access, please contact the class or subject teacher in the first instance. Alongside the Parent Representatives system and the fortnightly Newsletter, these learning platforms are the third part of our strategy to strengthen communication.

Student Photograph Service

We are grateful for your positive feedback regarding the BCA Photo Gallery initiative. You can order your children's photos [here](#), with delivery to school by the end of the week. Orders can be collected by the school, also by your child if you let us know at admin@bcandorra.com

2022-23 School Calendar

We have finalised the 2022-23 School Year BCA Calendar and published it [here](#). Please use this to inform your holiday planning. As mentioned in previous Newsletters, except in an emergency, please restrict absences to the generous school vacations. All absences (full or part day) which do not come under the category of medical reasons, approved alternative educational activity, or difficult family circumstances will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. This will enable a continued focus on high quality learning. Dates of parents' evenings etc. will be announced before the start of the next school year.

We wish all BCA families and staff a very happy Easter holiday.



**Help Ukraine's
children
by donating
your used books**

**April 04th to 08th
At BCA's Hall**

Books will be sold on Sant Jordi's day.
(Please, avoid donating books in poor conditions)