

THE UK'S
CHILDREN'S
NEWSPAPER
WITH MORE THAN
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THINK
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First News

Issue 767 £2.25 26 February – 4 March 2021

HELPING
THE UK GROW

NEWS | SPORTS | ENTERTAINMENT | INTERVIEWS | PUZZLES | COMPETITIONS

115 DAYS AND COUNTING

by editor in chief Nicky Cox

PRIME Minister Boris Johnson has announced that all children will be able to go back to school in England on 8 March.

It's the first big change in the PM's four-part plan for relaxing COVID lockdown rules in England. If all goes well, we should see the end of any restrictions on 21 June. That's 115 days from today (Friday). And, yes, we're counting – it's a bit like waiting for Christmas!

The lockdown will be lifted in all areas of England at the same time, with no tiers like we had before. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were all planning to announce their plans for leaving lockdown this week. Students in Scotland and some in Wales have already gone back to school this week. Children in Northern Ireland will return on 8 March, like in England.

WHAT IS THE PM'S FOUR-PART PLAN?

8 MARCH

1 • All pupils to return to English schools. Secondary school pupils will be tested twice a week for COVID-19.

- Breakfast and after-school clubs to start, as well as other children's activities such as sport.
- Two people from different households can meet outdoors just for fun, maybe for a chat or a picnic.

29 MARCH

2 • Just in time for Easter, you won't have to stay at home any more.

- Six people can meet outside, including in gardens.
- Two households can meet outside.
- Outside sports such as tennis, basketball and organised outdoor sports will be allowed, plus outdoor swimming.

12 APRIL

- Hairdressers, leisure centres, gyms and all shops will be able to open again.
- You'll be able to go to zoos, theme parks and drive-in cinemas.
- Parent and child groups of up to 15 people can restart indoors.

17 MAY

- 3 • Restaurants, cinemas, theatres and sports stadiums will reopen. The delayed Euro 2020 competition begins on 11 June with Wembley set to host seven matches, including the final on 11 July. Wimbledon, which was cancelled in 2020 for the first time since the Second World War, is scheduled for 28 June to 11 July, with Formula 1's British Grand Prix at Silverstone on 18 July.
- 30 people will be able to get together.
- You'll be able to see friends and family indoors, but only two households at a time.

21 JUNE

- 4 • All rules will be lifted and we can go back to "normal" – with large events able to take place.

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN FOR ALL THIS TO TAKE PLACE AS PLANNED?

The Prime Minister's plan will take place on the dates above **IF** the things below happen:

1. The vaccine programme needs to keep going well. So far, around 20 million people have had their first dose.
2. The number of people needing hospital care or dying of coronavirus continues to fall.
3. The NHS is coping.
4. New variants of the coronavirus don't cause new problems, especially for the vaccine.

PROTECTION FOR POLAR BEARS

Did you know it's International Polar Bear Day on 27 February? The day aims to raise awareness about these majestic animals, the threats they face and what you can do to help them. You can check out some fun polar bear activities at www.wwf.org.uk.



CADBURY'S CONUNDRUM EGG SOLD



Remember the Cadbury's Conundrum Creme Egg we told you about on our Crazy But True page a few weeks ago? We can now reveal it sold for a whopping £37,200 at auction! The spectacular golden egg smashed its estimate of £15,000 to £20,000 and eventually sold to an online bidder.

GOLDEN GLOBES

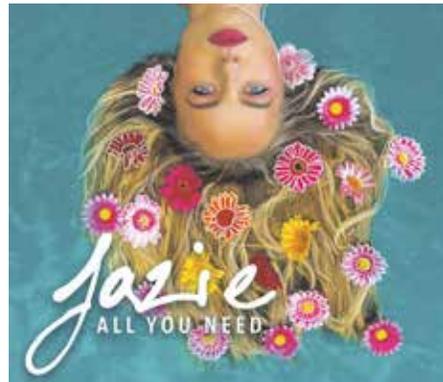
The 78th Golden Globe Awards take place in America on 28 February. The annual awards celebrate the best movies and TV shows. *The Croods: A New Age*, *Onward*, *Soul*, *Over The Moon* and *Wolfwalkers* have all been nominated for Best Animated Picture.

QUICK NEWS

TO READ YOURSELF AND SHARE WITH FRIENDS

SOUL SINGING

A charity single is being released to help children suffering in lockdown. Young musician Jasmine Eskenzi partnered with the NSPCC for the track, *All You Need*. Jasmine said the song is all about empowerment and self-love. Proceeds from the single will go to the children's charity.



ROYAL ROUND-UP



Prince Harry and Meghan Markle have announced they will not be returning as senior working royals. That means they lose their official titles and charity roles. The couple have also taken part in a tell-all interview with US chat show host Oprah Winfrey. They are expected to reveal lots about life in the royal family and other personal details. The programme is set to air in America on 7 March. In other royal news, Princess Eugenie and Jack Brooksbank have revealed the name of their baby boy. He will be known as August Philip Hawke Brooksbank.

NEW EMOJIS ARRIVE

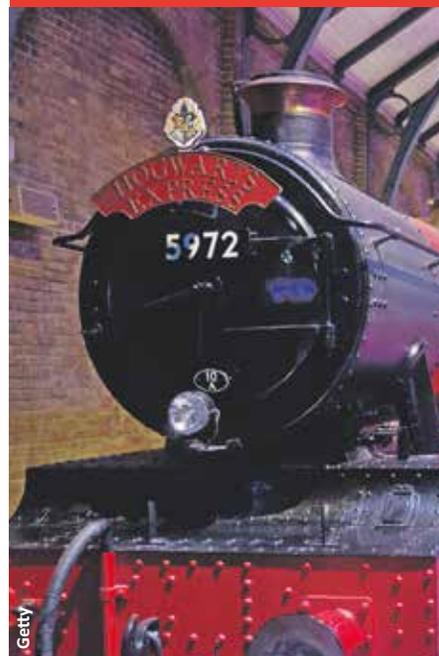
A host of new emojis are coming – including an updated vaccine emoji. As part of Apple's iOS 14.5 update, you'll be able to customise couples according to their race (so one person can be white and the other Asian, for example) and there will be more faces to choose from. These will include a dizzy face and a person with a beard. There will also be more heart emojis.

BIG BANKSY BUY

A Banksy picture has been removed from a wall, after being bought by an art collector for a six-figure sum. The artwork, showing a girl hula-hooping with a bicycle tyre, was discovered on a Nottingham street last year. New owner John Brandler says he hopes to restore the piece and display it in a museum.

POTTER MAGIC

A magical Harry Potter exhibition is set to tour the world in 2022. *Harry Potter: The Exhibition* will celebrate the films and stories of Harry Potter, *Fantastic Beasts* and the expanded Wizarding World. It will visit six continents and display all sorts of original props and costumes.



LEARNING THE LINGO

More than three million British people have learned a new language during lockdown. A study by language experts Rosetta Stone found that 28% of UK adults can speak a second language fluently now. That's up from 23% in 2020. Spanish is the most popular language to learn. French is in second place, with German in third. What language would you like to be fluent in?

BONKERS BIRTHDAY

It's Dr Seuss Day on 2 March. Dr Seuss' first children's book was published all the way back in 1937. Now his books are read across the world and there's even a Dr Seuss zone at Universal Studios in Florida! Why not enjoy reading a Dr Seuss book in celebration? Our favourite is *The Cat in the Hat!*



STRAWBERRY DELIGHT



British strawberries are hitting shelves early this year! Aldi has become the first supermarket to offer home-grown strawberries. The fruit has been picked from Springfield Nursery in South Wales. British strawberries aren't available until the start of summer, normally.

COULD GAMING BE GOOD FOR YOU?!



istock

BOYS who regularly play videogames at the age of 11 are less likely to be depressed three years later, says a new study.

Researchers have been looking at how different types of screen time can affect young people’s mental health, and whether it makes a difference for boys and girls.

The group, led by a researcher from UCL, used data collected from 11,341 young people.

When the children were aged 11, they were asked about how much time they spent on social media, playing videogames or using the internet. When they were 14, the same children were asked about symptoms such as low mood, lack of enjoyment and poor concentration.

The study found that boys who played videogames most days had 24% fewer depressive symptoms three years

later than boys who played videogames less than once a month. This was only the case if the boys didn’t do lots of physical activity, which researchers say could be because they were having their fun playing videogames instead.

The researchers argue that there are some positive aspects of videogaming that could support your mental health. This includes things such as problem-solving.

The study, published in *Psychological Medicine*, also looked at social media. It found that girls who used social media most days at age 11 had 13% more depressive symptoms three years later than those who used social media less than once a month.

RESTORING NATURE

by Archie Johnston

LAST week, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) published a new report called *Making Peace With Nature*.

It calls for an urgent change in the way people interact with the environment. UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that human destruction of nature is “senseless”.

The report echoes the demands of environmental groups like Greenpeace in saying we need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to ‘net zero’ by 2050. This means that emissions must be balanced with processes that remove carbon from the atmosphere, or be removed completely.

The key dangers addressed were climate change, pollution and the loss of biodiversity. The UNEP says that, if all its targets are met, Earth’s ability to “support life, provide resources and absorb waste matter” will be restored.



Getty

Sea levels are rising, and the effects are already being felt in places like Indonesia (above)

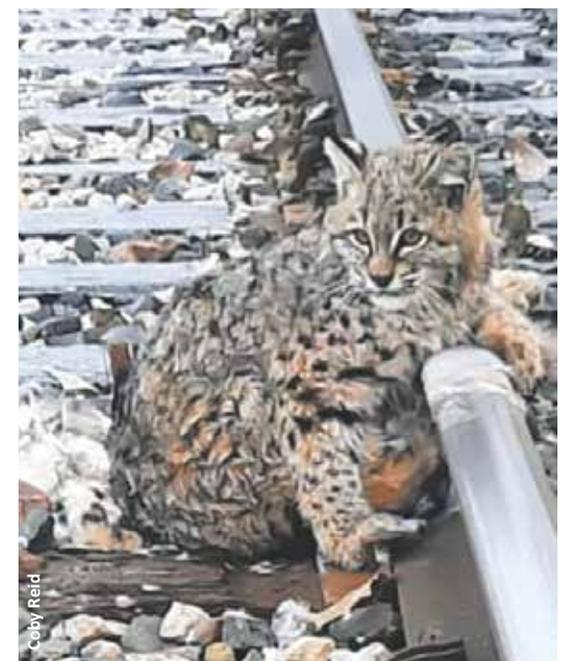
HAIRY RESCUE FOR FROZEN BOBCAT

A FROZEN bobcat had a lucky escape when it was rescued from a rail track in Canada just before a train was due.

The bobcat – a medium-sized wild cat native to North America – was eating its prey when its hind paws became frozen to the track.

Luckily, train conductor Coby Reid spotted the animal while doing a track inspection, just 30 minutes before a train was due. He and his colleagues managed to get some warm water and free the furry fella before it was too late.

Mr Reid said that, even once the kitty’s paws were loose, he didn’t seem fussed about his dangerous location and wanted to keep eating!



Coby Reid

DIARY DATE



istock

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT
22 FEBRUARY – 7 MARCH

HAVE you ever thought about where your food and drink come from? Or how your clothes are made? Fairtrade Fortnight is all about making sure farmers and workers in developing countries get better prices, decent working conditions and fair terms. Look out for this symbol on items and you’ll know it’s been produced fairly!

4. NEWS IN PICTURES



TIJUANA, MEXICO

PEOPLE seeking asylum in the United States sleep next to the El Chaparral border crossing. US President Joe Biden has reversed Donald Trump's immigration policy, but changes are being made slowly due to concerns about COVID-19. This means many migrants are still unable to cross America's borders.



SOUTH GEORGIA

A LUCKY wildlife photographer has revealed "once in a lifetime" photos of what he believes is a "never before seen" yellow penguin. Yves Adams was leading a two-month photography expedition through Antarctica and the South Atlantic when the tour stopped off at the wild islands of South Georgia, and he saw the yellow bird. Yves, from Ghent, Belgium, said: "I'd never seen or heard of a yellow penguin before. There were 120,000 birds on that beach and this was the only yellow one there."



LONDON, UK

THE Natural History Museum installed Luke Jerram's model of Mars alongside its famous blue whale, to celebrate NASA's Perseverance rover arriving on Mars after a seven-month journey from Earth. See page 12 for the full story.



CODOGNO, ITALY

A MURAL shows Wonder Woman dressed as a frontline health worker. A memorial for the victims of the pandemic was revealed this week, to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the first patient to test positive for COVID-19 in Italy.



BEXLEYHEATH, UK

TOM Jones, aged 103, is following in the footsteps of Captain Sir Tom Moore by walking to raise money for charity. This Tom is pretty speedy and doesn't need any walking aids, and has even been pictured doing laps around the garden of his care home while wearing a tuxedo and sipping a cocktail!



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GARDENS ARE TINY TAKEAWAYS

Nicholas Tew

EVEN the tiniest garden or window box can be a surprisingly large source of food for bees and other insects in our towns and cities, scientists have found.

Scientists led by the University of Bristol took samples from nearly 200 different plant species in Bristol, Edinburgh, Leeds and Reading. They were shocked at how big a role our gardens play in providing food for pollinating insects, such as bees, wasps, butterflies, moths and beetles.

The results showed that, on average, gardens provide 85% of the nectar in urban areas. Around 29% of the land in urban areas is made up of gardens, which is around six times the area of parks, the scientists say.

It was found that just three gardens can produce a teaspoon of nectar every day, which is enough to feed thousands of bees.

Nicholas Tew, lead author of the study,

said we can help by “ensuring there is always something in flower from early spring to late autumn, mowing the lawn less often to let dandelions, clovers, daisies and other plant flowers flourish, avoiding spraying pesticides, and avoiding covering garden in paving, decking or artificial turf.”

All of which is even more reason to join in with our [#HelpingTheUKGrow](#) challenge, where we’re asking you all to plant something as a symbol of growth for the future. When you do, make sure you share your photos with us, and challenge someone else to join in! See [first.news/HelpingTheUKGrow](#) to find out more and to send us your pics!

CATCH-UP QUESTIONS

by Archie Johnston

AS some pupils have returned to school in Scotland and Wales this week, the British Psychological Society (BPS) says that pressure to “catch up” after lockdown might not be good for children’s mental health.

The Government has announced £1 billion in funding to support children making up for lost time after the closure of schools. However, their suggestion of longer school days and shorter holidays to help children catch up has not gone down well with some teachers and educational experts.

Dr Dan O’Hare, the co-chair of educational and child psychology for the BPS, said: “We can’t assume that the right thing to support their recovery and wellbeing is to be in lessons for longer each day.”



Getty

POLL OF THE WEEK

Would you like longer school days to help you catch up on school work?

VOTE AT FIRST.NEWS/POLLS

EDITOR’S COMMENT



AT last!

There have been times when we have all felt that we were in an endless coronavirus tunnel. Now, we have a plan to come out of the other side. It couldn’t have come at a more perfect time. With spring round the corner and increasingly longer and sunnier days, there is a new sense of hope.

I was lucky enough to get a COVID-19 vaccine this week – it’s thanks to the brilliant scientists who developed them that we can all look forward to a “normal” summer.

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GOOD WEEK FOR

JASMINE HARRISON

A 21-YEAR-OLD teacher has become the youngest woman to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean. Jasmine Harrison, from North Yorkshire, left from the Canary Islands and reached Antigua 70 days later.

BAD WEEK FOR

KIRBY KLEMENTS

WHEN Kirby Klements went outside after hearing a loud crash, he was surprised to find that jet engine parts had fallen from the sky and crushed his truck. Bad news for the truck, but the American was uninjured.

ALLERGY DEATHS DECLINE

NHS data has shown that deaths from allergic reactions are really rare and have dropped over the last 20 years.

We often think of nuts as a big factor in allergic reactions, but the data studied by Imperial College London experts showed that cows’ milk is the most common cause of deadly reactions in children.

Dr Paul Turner said: “There is a lot of awareness of allergies to peanut and tree nut, but many people think milk allergy is mild. People don’t realise how dangerous it can be.”

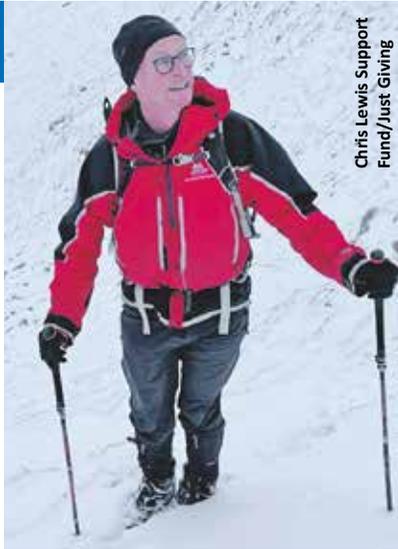
However, we must stress that this is still very unlikely. Deaths from food allergies are believed to be less than ten each year.

Getty

CUMBRIA

● “Phenomenal” support for injured volunteer

More than half a million pounds was raised in two days to help a volunteer who was badly injured in a mountain rescue. Chris Lewis was on his way to help campers who had broken lockdown rules when he fell 150m (500ft). Fellow volunteer Mike Blakey said that Mr Lewis may end up in a wheelchair but that the amount of money raised (£800,000 at the time of writing) was “phenomenal”.

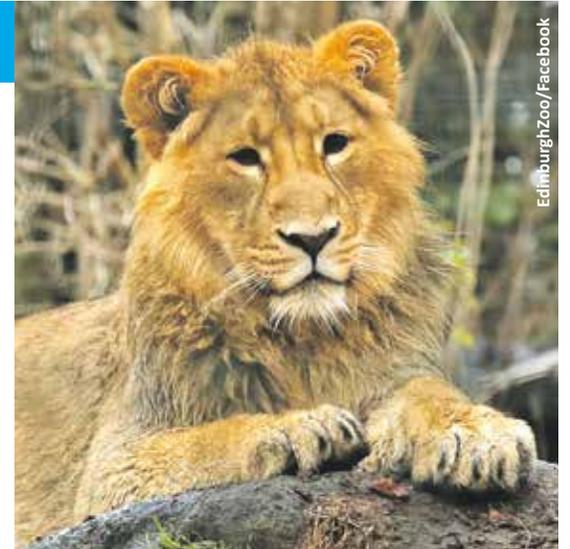


Chris Lewis Support Fund/Just Giving

EDINBURGH

● Edinburgh Zoo reopens

As Scotland begins to open up after lockdown, Edinburgh Zoo is back in business! It’s only for people that live in Edinburgh for now, though. The zoo has reassured people that strict safety measures will be in place to protect visitors, staff and animals. It’s been a tough time for zoos, as it is very expensive to look after the animals and most money comes from visitors. A post said: “THANK YOU to everyone who has supported us. You are helping to care for our animals and protect endangered species in Scotland and around the world.”

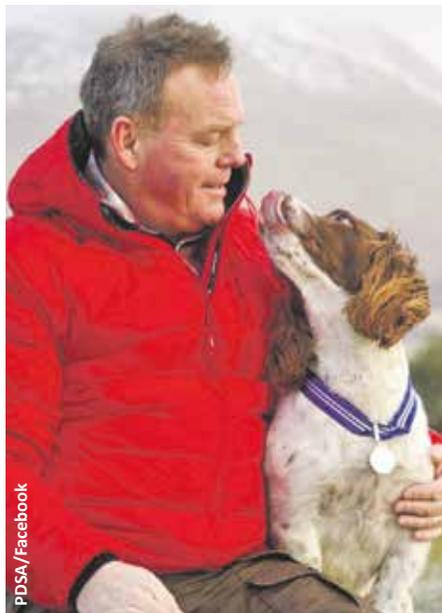


EdinburghZoo/Facebook

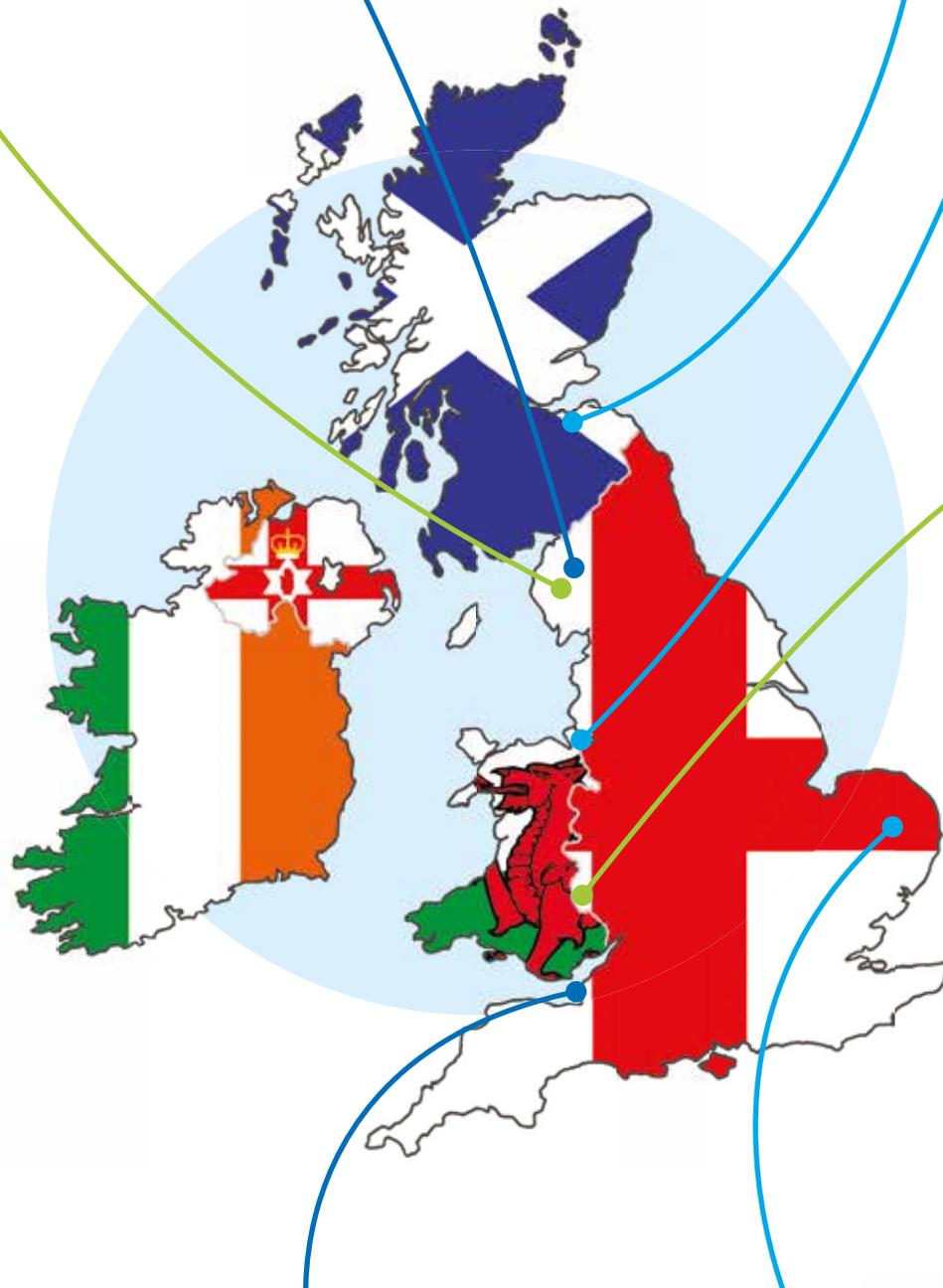
CUMBRIA

● Miracle dog’s medal

A 13-year-old springer spaniel has received a medal for providing comfort and support to thousands of people worldwide. Max the Miracle Dog was awarded the Order of Merit from vet charity the People’s Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA). He has more than 200,000 followers online and thousands of people watch his walks around the Lake District. Kerry Irving, Max’s owner, said: “When I was at my lowest, Max became my reason to live and he continues to make me smile every day. Being able to share the support, comfort and joy that Max brings... has been a privilege.”



PDSA/Facebook



MERSEYSIDE

● Vaccine mix-up

A healthy man in his 30s was offered a vaccine early when an NHS mix-up listed him as 6.2cm tall! This meant Liam Thorp’s body mass index (BMI), which uses your height and weight as an indicator of health, was 28,000. That would suggest someone who is extremely unhealthy – to be overweight, you need a BMI of just 25.

HEREFORDSHIRE

● Football fundraisers

An under-12s football team is doing a 2,307km (1,434-mile) virtual tour of football grounds to raise money for charity. The Pumas at Tupsley Girls FC have been cycling, skateboarding, scooting, walking and running locally to make up the miles. They are raising money for Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) in memory of 15-year-old Kieran Joyce, the brother of a Tupsley Girls player, who died in 2019.



TupsleyGirlsFC/Facebook

BRISTOL

● Demand for food support

A charity that supplies food to those in need across the southwest of England says that “if we doubled in size there would still be enough demand”. The comments came from Phoebe Ruxton at FareShare South West, who stressed that “the stories we hear every day are nothing like we’ve heard before”. The Bristol-based charity aims to give out 2.5m meals by the end of March to the homeless and struggling families.



FareShare/Facebook

NORFOLK

● Total-tea amazing!

An artist who was running out of room for her many paintings has decided to paint on used teabags instead. Jan Heath says that moving to a much smaller canvas has been an enjoyable challenge. She even likes to match the tea to her pictures, like using Three Ginger teabags for her paintings of three ginger cats!



justlovetopaint/Facebook

SUPER PLANTS!



Cotoneaster franchetii

SCIENTISTS have named the *Cotoneaster franchetii* plant as the best shrub for cleaning polluted air.

The research shows that the bushy, hairy-leaved super plant is at least 20% more effective at soaking up pollution compared to other shrubs.

Dr Tijana Blanus, who led the research, said that the *Cotoneaster's* thick foliage would make it "ideal along busy roads in pollution hot spots".

Elsewhere, a rare cactus from the Amazon has flowered for the first time in the UK. Cambridge University Botanic Garden livestreamed the blooming of the moonflower, which only lasts for 12 hours, changing scent from jasmine to something more like "public toilets"!



The moonflower

BEACHES NOT A COVID RISK



Getty

A GOVERNMENT adviser has told MPs that beaches are safe, and have never caused people to catch COVID-19.

Prof Mark Woolhouse, an epidemiologist at the University of Edinburgh, told the Science and Technology Committee that there was "very little evidence of outdoor transmission" in the UK. He told MPs: "Over the summer we were treated to all this on the television news, pictures of crowded beaches, and there was an outcry. There were no outbreaks linked to public beaches. There's never been a COVID-19

outbreak linked to a beach, ever, anywhere in the world, to the best of my knowledge."

Experts believe that breezy air and warm temperatures can slow the spread of the virus.

Prof Woolhouse said outdoor activities like sporting events could be riskier, as they make social distancing harder and have "pinch points" like entrances or food stalls where many people are forced together.

WOW!

MORE than 140,000 virus species have been found in the human gut!

Amazingly, more than half of them have never been seen before. That's a lot of research for scientists to get stuck into!



Getty

WOOD BURNERS BAD POLLUTERS

NEW research shows that the growing number of wood-burning stoves in homes is an increasing source of fine particle pollution.

Research by the Department for Environment shows that open fires and stoves cause 38% of fine particle pollution in the UK, compared with 12% caused by road traffic. This is despite only 8% of the population burning wood indoors.

Fine particle pollution is seen as a risk to health as the particles are tiny – the width of a strand of hair – and can enter your lungs or even lodge in organs.



Getty

MEAT-FREE MEALS ROW



Getty

THE French government has lashed out at a mayor for taking meat off the school menu.

Mayor Gregory Doucet, of French city Lyon, has said the decision to offer the single menu, which includes fish and eggs, was made to offer a smooth service at lunchtimes while there is social distancing.

But members of the government, from a different party to the mayor, were outraged. One said the decision was an "unacceptable insult" for French farmers and butchers. What do you think?

USA



Getty

● Bear bum shock

A woman in Alaska got the fright of her life when she went to the loo in an outdoor toilet out in the wilderness. As Shannon Stevens sat down, something bit her bare bum. Her brother Erik came to investigate and was stunned by what he saw. He said: "I opened the toilet seat and there's a bear face just right there at the level of the toilet seat, just looking right back up through the hole, right at me!" The pair ran back to their yurt and Erik treated Shannon's sore bum with a first aid kit. Luckily, it wasn't a serious injury and Shannon was okay.

ITALY



● Mount Etna erupts

Europe's most active volcano, Mount Etna, erupted a number of times throughout last week, spewing a fountain of lava and ash into the sky. Authorities said that they were monitoring the situation, but that they didn't think it posed any danger to nearby villages. The European Space Agency (ESA) used a satellite to watch the eruption and to measure the lava flows inside the volcano. They also used atmospheric sensors on satellites, which can identify the gases released by the eruption and look at the wider environmental impact.



Getty

JAPAN



Getty

● Harsh hair rules

A former Osaka high school student has won a lawsuit against her local government after she faced discrimination from her school for not having "black enough hair". The female student's natural hair colour is brown, but the school repeatedly told her to dye her hair to make it look blacker. She was banned from attending some classes and a school trip because "her hair was not dyed black enough," the lawsuit said. The court ruled that the local government was responsible for the student's emotional distress, but did not find the school's strict rules to be illegal.

SOUTH AFRICA



Ashia Cheetah Conservation

● Cheetahs rewilded

For the first time, two cheetahs who were born in captivity in the UK have been successfully rewilded, meaning they are able to fend for themselves in the wild. Saba and Nairo were born and raised in Port Lympne Hotel & Reserve in Kent. A year ago, they were flown 6,000 miles (9,660km) to the Ashia Cheetah Sanctuary. Over the last year, they have been trained to get used to life in the wild and, on 17 February, they were set free to live naturally in the wild.

MYANMAR



● The 'five twos revolution'

Thousands of protesters took to streets across Myanmar on Monday to protest against the military takeover of the country. The military said protests would be met with violence, but that didn't stop huge numbers of people from turning out. The day of protests has been called the 'five twos revolution' in reference to the date: 22.2.2021. The country's former leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, is still under house arrest.



Getty

ISRAEL



Getty

● Vaccine badges

Israel has begun to roll out a "green badge" app for people who have had both shots of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. It will allow them to enter gyms, cultural events and restaurants. The country's health ministry said the risk of illness or hospitalisation dropped by more than 98% for those with two jabs. Almost half of the 9.3m population has had both doses.

OUR WORLD



NAME: ANNABEL
LIVES: SCOTLAND

To find out more, go to
www.comicrelief.com/rednoseday



ANNABEL was diagnosed with dyspraxia when she was five years old.

The condition affects her balance, core strength and co-ordination. It takes Annabel longer to learn things at school, which can leave her feeling down.

Annabel attends Stable Life, a project funded by Comic Relief that offers outdoor activities and horse riding to support young people with mental health issues.

Since attending Stable Life, Annabel hasn't looked back and says: "It has taught me things that will stay with me forever."



First News has teamed up with

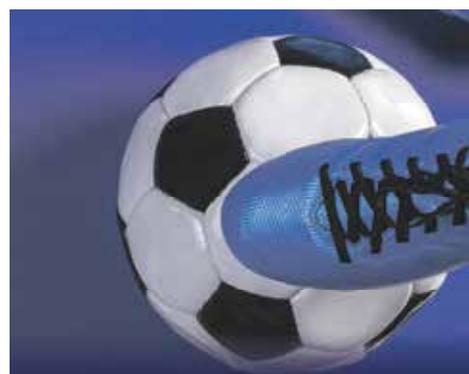


show FYI and the



to make programmes and videos about the news, which you can watch on **First News Education TV**. This week, FYI is looking at what young people think about sport and physical activity.

OUR partner children's news show, FYI (shown on Sky News/Sky Kids and at first.news/EducationTV), carried out a survey of 1,000 7 to 14-year-olds to make sure the voices of young people were heard by the House of Lords committee (see right). We wanted to know what you like about sport and recreation, what you don't like and what would encourage you to be more active. The results of the survey, completed by Opinion Matters, have been sent to the committee as evidence. You can read some of the most important results on this page.



What is the House of Lords?

The House of Lords is the upper chamber of the UK Parliament. The lower one is the House of Commons, where elected MPs discuss issues and laws. The Lords shares the task of making and shaping laws and they check the work of the Government.

A QUESTION OF SPORT



SHOULD the UK be better at supporting people, particularly young people, to be more active? That's the question a House of Lords committee is asking. The country has seen a decline in fitness, with a 2018 study by Essex University finding that the least fit child in a class of children in 1998 would be one of the five fittest in a class tested today. And that was before COVID-19, which has seen levels of physical activity drop even further.

Now, the House of Lords National Plan for Sport and Recreation Committee is looking at how we can change things.

Some of the questions they're asking include:

- How we can increase physical activity, including among young people
- How can children and young people be encouraged to participate in sport and recreation both at school and outside school, and lead an active lifestyle?
- Should there be a national plan for sport and recreation?

19%
– almost one in five – children surveyed have taken part in online exercise classes.

43%
of surveyed children say they only do one hour or less of exercise a week, including 14% who say they do no exercise at all.

35%
– more than a third – want to keep up walking as a form of exercise after lockdown.

Most rate their school sports facilities well.
89% say they are average or better.
79% say the same about facilities for exercise in their communities.

23%
– almost a quarter – of children say they only exercise up to twice a week.



64% of the children surveyed said either team sports
34% or running or walking
30% was their favourite way to exercise.

More than eight out of ten children say they enjoy PE lessons at school.

64%
– nearly two thirds – have been walking to get exercise during lockdown.

75% aren't a member of a local leisure centre or gym.

63%
– nearly two thirds – of children think they don't do enough physical activity or would like to do more.

75% rely on school for some, or most, of their physical activity.

Teachers – you can use your First News login to access education resources to accompany the films at first.news/EducationTV

Baroness Karren Brady CBE (who you might know from TV's *The Apprentice*) is on the House of Lords committee and talks about the survey on this week's FYI. You can watch it at first.news/EducationTV episode 112.





© Sangha Pangolin Project/Maja Gudehus

ON World Pangolin Day (20 February), charity Born Free announced a new campaign to help protect and save these unique creatures from extinction.

There are eight species of pangolin in the world, and all eight are at risk of extinction if more is not done to protect them.

Pangolins are the most trafficked animal on the planet, with their scales and meat in high demand in some cultures. In 2020, pangolins and bats were named as possible sources for the COVID-19 pandemic, leading China to remove pangolin scales from a list of approved ingredients for traditional Chinese medicine. While this is good news, the demand for pangolin scales is still high, leading to high prices on the black market [when things are sold illegally], which makes poaching pangolins even more profitable than ever.

In September, more than a tonne of pangolin scales was seized by customs officials in Hong Kong and, just a few weeks ago, a haul of pangolin scales was taken from a gang in India.

Scientists still have lots to learn about pangolins, but if the illegal trafficking and poaching continues, there is a high chance they will be extinct before we fully understand them.

WILD HIPPO CULL



EXPERTS have said that wild hippos in Colombia need to be culled as they're having a damaging effect on local wildlife and the environment.

A group of hippos were imported into the country for a criminal's private zoo decades ago, but some were released and their numbers have grown massively. Around 100 are concentrated around one of the country's main waterways, the River Magdalena.

Scientists fear that unless the population is reduced, the hippos will

cause huge problems. They believe the non-native species could have an impact on the local ecosystem, affecting native species like the manatee and even altering the levels of chemicals found in rivers.

However, not everyone is for the cull, especially as hippos are considered a vulnerable species.

PANCAKE PARTY



STAFF at Longleat have celebrated pancake day with their family of pancake tortoises!

Five of the critically endangered tortoises have been born at the safari park in the last year. The eldest, Syrup, celebrated his first birthday on Shrove Tuesday.

Pancake tortoises are known in the tortoise world for being speedy and agile – they can even climb! They are under threat in the wild from loss of habitat and poachers, who sell them illegally as pets.



FEED THE BIRDS

AFTER a huge response from its annual Birdwatch, the RSPB is asking for the public to help feed garden birds.

Spring is on the way, but with cold snaps and wet, wintry weather still around, it is important to help out native birds who may struggle to find food. Bird seed and feeders are available in most supermarkets or you can use things you have at home, like porridge oats, to make your own bird food.

istock

HOW LOVING YOUR CLOTHES CAN PROTECT THE PLANET!



LAST year, Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, launched The Earthshot Prize, a competition to inspire people to solve some of the world's greatest environmental challenges.

Every year until 2030, the Prince and members of the prestigious Prize Council will award £1 million to five projects, each tackling a different issue.

Throughout the month of February, the focus has been on Building A Waste-Free World, one of the five categories of The Earthshot Prize. WRAP (the Waste and Resources Action Programme) is a charity partner for the prize, promoting sustainable resource use and, in this article, talking about clothes!

Clothes are a big part of our everyday lives. They keep us warm, allow us to express ourselves and help us enjoy fun activities like baking, playing sports or dancing. And looking after your clothes can also be a good way to look after the planet.

Throwing clothes in the bin when we don't want them any more is something that contributes to climate change. Every year in the UK, about 336,000 tonnes of used clothing are thrown away – that's the same weight as roughly 84,000 Asian elephants! This is a huge waste of all the things that are needed to make clothing in the first place.

For example, did you know it can take up to 2,700 litres of water to create a single cotton T-shirt? If you drank a litre of water every day, it would take you nearly seven-and-a-half years to drink that much! In some parts of the world, water is in very short supply, so throwing clothes away wastes this precious resource that some people can't access at all.

Luckily, there are lots of really easy ways we can all make our clothes last longer. When we get to the age where we grow out of our clothes less quickly, we can keep them for longer, and just doing that means we put less pressure on the environment to make new clothes.

The main thing is not to put your unwanted clothes in the bin.



REPAIR

We get it – rips happen! And although a couple of rips in a pair of jeans can be cool, some clothes don't look so great with a tear or hole in them. But this doesn't mean they have to end up in the bin. With a responsible adult on hand, you can patch up some small holes and tears with a needle and thread, and sewing on a button is easier than you think!



REUSE

When you've grown out of clothes, or they are too old to repair, there are plenty of other ways to carry on using them! If you're a confident crafter, you can



try making some home-made make-up remover pads or kitchen cloths with an old T-shirt. Even better, these are reusable, so you don't have to keep buying disposable alternatives!

If you want a super simple option, there are loads of things you can do with old socks – they make brilliant dusters and storage bags for toys! And of course, there's always the classic sock puppet.

DONATE

When charity shops reopen, they always welcome donations of good quality clothes they can sell. The same goes for textile banks too. These are great options when you've grown out of your clothes.



RECYCLE

When all else fails, you can recycle your clothes! Plenty of shops will accept unwanted and unwearable clothing to recycle, meaning these precious fabrics can be transformed into something brand-new – even new clothes!

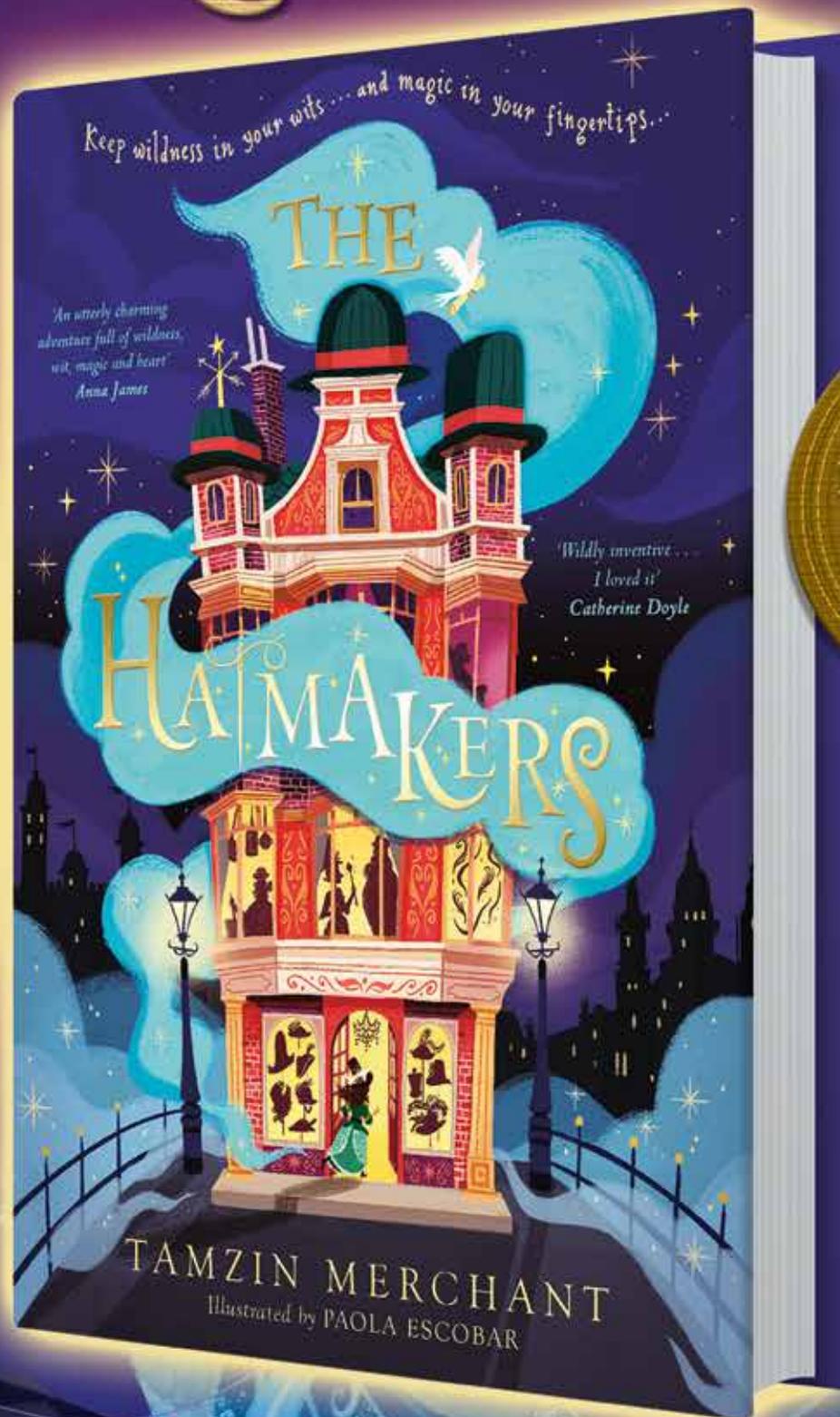


No clothing deserves to end up in the bin. We hope you'll try some of our suggested tips to make a difference for our lovely planet. If you need more help, go to loveyourclothes.org.uk for loads of great advice.

THE SUNDAY TIMES
Children's Book Of The Week



THE HATMAKERS



Perfect
for fans of
NEVERMOOR
and
**HARRY
POTTER**

**“AN UTTERLY CHARMING
ADVENTURE FULL OF WILDNESS,
WIT, MAGIC AND HEART”**

Anna James, author of Pages & Co series

**“WILDLY INVENTIVE...
I LOVED IT”**

Catherine Doyle, author of The Storm Keeper's Island

Available from Waterstones.com



Perseverance's planned route

ROVER LANDS ON MARS



NASA/JPL-Caltech

NASA's Perseverance rover is exploring Mars after successfully landing last week.

The US space agency's latest Red Planet robot is the most advanced yet, and it's on a mission to find signs of ancient life and collect samples of rock for future return to Earth.

NASA hopes this mission will provide lots of valuable data for a first trip by astronauts to Mars.

There were happy scenes at mission control in Los Angeles, USA, as the rover successfully touched down inside a huge crater last Thursday. It left Earth on 30 July 2020 and had been travelling through space for nearly seven months.



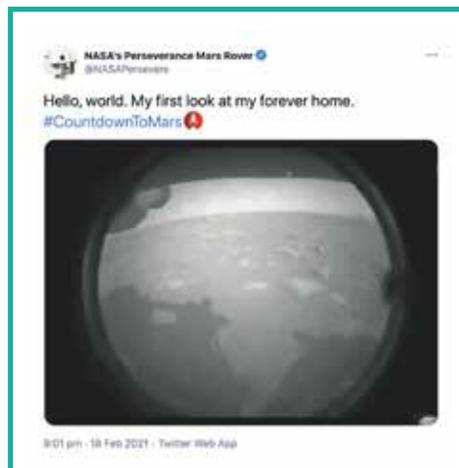
Mission control

The 1,025-kilogram robot covered some 472 million kilometres before it entered the Martian atmosphere at 19,000km/h (12,000mph). Its descent to the Red Planet was entirely self-guided, which means that the team at mission control could only watch and hope it all went well. After entering the atmosphere, Perseverance cut itself loose from its parachute and used rocket thrusters on a 'sky crane' to slow down.

After the "seven minutes of terror" as it landed, Perseverance flight controller Swati Mohan announced: "Touchdown confirmed! Perseverance safely on the surface of Mars, ready to begin seeking signs of past life." NASA scientists, all wearing masks due to the pandemic, erupted with cheers and applause. A few minutes later, the first images taken by Perseverance arrived on Earth.

The Perseverance rover is designed to help us better understand the geology

of Mars and find signs of ancient life. The mission will collect and store a set of rock and soil samples that will hopefully be returned to Earth in the future. Perseverance will also test new technology that could be used for future robotic and human missions to Mars.



Perseverance's first image of Mars, which was posted on Twitter

DOLPHINS ARE A BIT LIKE YOU



istock

DOLPHINS have developed similar personalities to human beings, a new study has found.

Researchers studied 134 male and female bottlenose dolphins around the world and found a number of personality aspects were similar to those found in people. In particular, dolphins were found to be curious and sociable, two traits commonly found in primates, including humans.

Dr Blake Morton, who led the study, stressed that humans and dolphins do not have exactly the same traits, just some similar ones.

It has long been known that dolphins are intelligent. This is partly explained by the fact that, like many primates, their brains are a much bigger size than they need to be for their bodies to function.

LOCKDOWN LEARNING

LAST week we showed you some of the iconic items in the Royal Institution (Ri) collection.

If you're looking for some fun science videos to keep you busy during lockdown, you can view the Ri's famous Christmas lectures on their website.

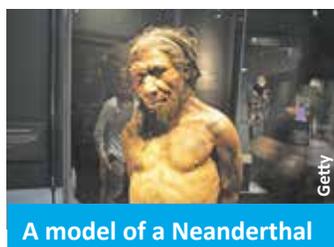
There are talks from 1968 up to last year, on everything from time travel to animal languages. And look out for a very young David Attenborough! Take a peek at tinyurl.com/RiXmasTalks.

COVID-19 CLUE

A NEW study has found that people with COVID-19 who get mild symptoms or no symptoms may have their ancient ancestors to thank for it.

Researchers in Germany identified a genetic element called a haplotype that reduced the risk of severe disease by almost a quarter. This particular haplotype, passed down in some people over thousands of years from an extinct human species called Neanderthals, affects the body's response to viruses. The scientists found it in patients with mild COVID and also in DNA taken from the skeletons of four ancient humans.

People of purely African descent don't carry Neanderthal DNA, which may explain why some black patients are more likely to suffer severe disease.



A model of a Neanderthal

SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

This report is from the Science Museum in London

MONDAY 1 March is International Wheelchair Day.

The wheelchair is used by millions of people around the world, but its history goes way back. While it's unclear what can be considered the first wheelchair, stone inscriptions from Ancient China and Greece suggest that wheelchair-type furniture has been used at least since the sixth century AD.

One of the best-known early examples was made by an unknown inventor in 1595 for King Philip II of Spain. It featured an elaborate design with plush upholstery. The more recent example pictured is from the 1990s. It's a 'Shadow Racer' designed by Jim Martinson, an injured war veteran, for track and road racing. You can find out more at tinyurl.com/WheelchairHistory.



© Science Museum Group

FIVE MINUTES WITH...



MATILDA LAWLER

THE young star makes her film debut in Disney's family comedy *Flora & Ulysses*!

● **What can you tell us about *Flora & Ulysses*?**

Well, I play Flora, and *Flora & Ulysses* is the story of a young girl who really just loves comic books. Her father is a comic book artist and author, and her parents recently separated, so she's feeling kind of broken. Then she meets a squirrel and the squirrel is a superhero, and the squirrel really brings her family back together.

● **Are you a comic book fan?**

I wasn't that much of a comic book person, but I have a lot of friends who love comic books. After I did *Flora & Ulysses* I was really curious, so I've been reading some lately. My favourite is *Calvin and Hobbes*.

● **How was it filming the scenes with *Ulysses*?**

That was definitely a challenge. A lot of the time I just had to act with air, but sometimes there was this stuffed animal that wasn't cute – it looked like a rat! It was kind of hard to work with, but the director, Lena [Khan], would sometimes use this cute stuffed squirrel and act out what *Ulysses* would do, which was fun.

● **Can you tell us any filming secrets?**

Yes, there's actually a funny story. There's a scene in the beginning, where I'm riding on my bike and I get hit on the head by a ball – and it turns out that the ball was CGI'd in. I actually fell off the bike because I'm not the best bike rider, and they added a CGI soccer ball in to make it look like that's what knocked me off, but really I just fell off the bike!

● **What animal would you choose as your superhero sidekick?**

I would choose an elephant because elephants are my favourite animal. I feel like they could take down any villain, they're pretty awesome.

● **What about a superpower?**

I would choose time travel! If you could travel back in time or to the future, I feel like that would just be so awesome. I would definitely go to the future and see if we have any cool inventions, or maybe I could meet my parents when they were kids – that would be interesting!



Flora & Ulysses is available to stream now on Disney+

ASTON

UNMASKED

AFTER being unmasked as Robin on *The Masked Singer*, Aston Merrygold has surprised by releasing two new singles in a week! We caught up with the star to talk about his new music and the exciting JLS reunion tour planned for this year!

● **We loved *The Masked Singer* this year. How was it performing as Robin?**

I enjoyed it but it was actually really difficult; a lot harder than I thought. It was hot, it was heavy and you can't see that well. The energy that everyone puts into it, though, it's like people really want to guess your voice! I kind of adopted this walk – which was a bit like the boxer Conor McGregor – so I could be kind of regal with the feathers and all that kind of stuff, and I got to really jump into this character! As soon as you go into that show thinking it's a singing competition, I think you're probably not there for the right reason. This show is about hiding your voice and trying to get the panel to give the most out-there guesses possible. Honestly, it was just fun!

● **Which celebs would you like to see on the show next time?**

Someone I'd really like to see on it is James Corden. I think everyone's seen him do the

odd thing or two on his show and on other shows, but I don't think he has really put his voice out there. He could sing a whole different array of stuff and really throw his voice around and I just don't think people would guess it!

● **You've been really busy with your own music too, and have two singles out!**

Do you know what, I've had albums' worth of songs just sitting on my laptop for years. I'm constantly writing still, so I thought why not put something out? Tomorrow is never promised and, if this past year is anything to go by, I don't want to have music I love and that I'm proud of just sitting there on a laptop for no-one to hear. Just do it, let people hear it, let people have it – that's the whole point in doing music, to share your mood, your artistry, what you feel. I just think it reflects the mood I've been in for the past year too. Everything in my life is positive, I want to find the positives in every single thing and this is an outlet for that.

● **How are the JLS reunion plans going? You announced you were back together and then the world went into lockdown!**

It's just one of those things, isn't it?! People were waiting for the tour in 2020 for so long, and then had it



The new singles



sed fans
ing Robin,

taken away again. The pent-up excitement and frustration of the past year is what is going to drive the first concert on the rescheduled tour this summer. Everyone, including the band, have been waiting for it for so long. I just can't even describe the feeling of that. What is it going to be like for someone who has been totally locked away and this is their first concert for a year? It will be our first show together in a long time, but also the first show any of us have been to in a year. So, it's going to be a party before, a party after, a party all the time! Honestly it is unimaginable, but it's going to happen and it's going to be massive!

★ **Have you managed to get much planned?**

We've got as much done as we can do with the lockdown restrictions in place. On paper, we're just looking at it thinking "this is going to be the best show that we have ever done". It's just so exciting that this idea came from all of us sitting down

one day and someone saying: "Shall we do it again?" Then all of us saying: "Yeah, let's do it!" Getting all the team back together and bringing in new parts to the JLS machine has been so exciting for us. We're itching to get out there.

● **Which of your songs are you most excited to perform live again?**

We've got all the classics from *Beat Again* to *She Makes Me Wanna*, but *Everybody In Love* was always a special record when we did it at a show. It was always the encore. I think of some of the biggest venues that we ever did, like the O₂ where the seats go up and around really high, and you've got all these people singing *Everybody In Love* with their hands up, going for it. Before, it was breathtaking; now it's just going to be something else. We're all gonna be back in this environment that we love to be in, having a good time, good vibes and just going for it. So that's going to be a moment, definitely!



Overboard and **Share a Coke** by Aston Merrygold are both out now

THIS WEEK



1 Taylor Swift is back in the charts with a new version of *Love Story*, which was originally released in 2008. The singer has recorded a new version of her album *Fearless* with six new songs on it. Taylor is planning to re-record the rest of her early albums, after a long battle over their rights with her previous record label.

2 A virtual concert is being held tomorrow, Saturday 27 February, to celebrate Pokémon's 25th anniversary. Rapper Post Malone will headline the concert, which is also being used to launch Pokémon's P25 Music programme. Find out more and catch the concert at 25.pokemon.com.



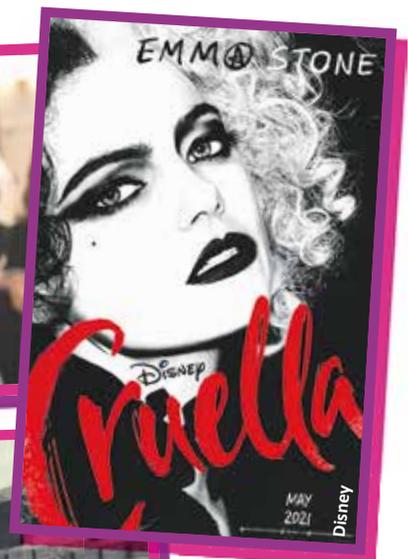
3 Chessington World of Adventures in Surrey has revealed the name and an artist's impression image of its new ride for 2021. *Croc Drop* will take riders 25m into the air before dropping them into the jaws of the giant croc Sobek. The park is hoping to welcome visitors later this year when restrictions are relaxed.

PICS OF THE WEEK

DISNEY has announced that its exciting new film *Cruella*, starring Emma Stone as Cruella de Vil, will be released in May.

Fans have been waiting patiently for the first-look trailer of the film, which finally premiered this week.

The trailer gives us a glimpse into the life of Cruella de Vil before the *101 Dalmatians* story, and will finally shed some light on how she became one of Disney's most notorious villains.



Cruella will be released on 28 May

WIN! A SUPERTHINGS POWER MACHINES BUNDLE

WE'VE teamed up with Magic Box Toys to offer ten lucky winners the chance to win an awesome SuperThings Power Machines bundle!

A new ultra rare glow-in-the-dark character – Dr Volt – arrives in Kaboom City! Volt is the clever inventor of the Power Machines, and has two rare gold leaders and six rare silver team captains.

When a riot breaks out in the lab, half of Volt's force become villains who then escape with a number of Power Machines. Now the battle to save Kaboom City continues!

With 80 characters to collect, there are also eight Power Jets, eight Giant Power Bots and eight Battle Spinners to collect, plus great value packs and the ultimate Battle Arena Playset.



Each bundle will include eight One Packs, two Power Jets, a Power Bot, a Battle Spinner and a Starter Pack. To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

Which of these vehicles would you typically find on a farm?
a) Crane b) Tractor c) Forklift



Find out more at
www.supertthings.com



ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY VOLT

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 19. The closing date is 11 March 2021.

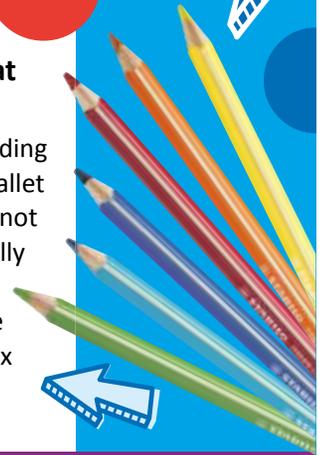
WIN! A STABILO® STATIONERY BUNDLE

CREATE something special this spring with these wonderful STABILO goodies that are up for grabs!

The STABILO power felt tip pens are perfect for adding a splash of colour to your page and you can win a wallet of 18, so the colour combinations are endless! Why not try designing something for someone environmentally conscious with the STABILO GREENcolors?! Their hexagonal shape and 24 colour options means there is a colour for every occasion. If you're looking to mix up card designs or add some lovely lettering to your creations, then the STABILO Pen 68 are ideal for the job. The quick drying non-smudge ink is great for ensuring your lettering stays in pristine condition.

We have nine STABILO bundles up for grabs. To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:

Which two colours make purple when mixed together?
a) Brown & blue b) Red & blue
c) Green & blue



ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY PEN

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 19. The closing date is 11 March 2021.

RASPBERRY PI FOUNDATION

Advertisement feature

SEND A MESSAGE TO ASTRONAUTS IN SPACE.



ASTRO PI MISSION ZERO

THE European Space Agency (ESA) and the Raspberry Pi Foundation are offering you the chance to take part in Astro Pi – Mission Zero!

Astro Pi – Mission Zero gives YOU the chance to write a simple computer program and send a message to the astronauts on board the International Space Station (ISS)!

Taking part is free and easy, and you don't need any coding experience. Just ask a parent or teacher to register at astro-pi.org/mission-zero!



“ You are promoted to real ISS scientists. Congratulations! ”

– Thomas Pesquet, ESA astronaut



Thomas points to Astro Pi computers on board the ISS

ALL ENTRIES MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 19 MARCH!

Head to astro-pi.org/mission-zero to start your mission!



● You've just launched a new podcast with WWF called *Call of the Wild*, so what can you tell us about it?

I'm so excited by it and I really hope that people enjoy the journey we take them on. It's a new thing for WWF, and for any kind of charity organisation in that sense. This seems to be the perfect way we could create this series and delve into some of the key areas about the environment and try to learn as much about it as we can. To try and learn about the things we can do that might help make a difference, and hopefully learn some cool stuff and hear from some interesting people. I think it is something that is needed and it's something that I very much believe in.

● How did you choose the different topics for each episode?

It's a massive subject and I think we are very, very lucky to have access to the resources that WWF have. They've been leading in this area for decades, so they had a pretty good idea of what we could be talking about and who we could be talking to. The first episode is kind of a good look at the natural world, and who better to hear from than Sir David Attenborough? Then we go into oceans and plastics, climate, travel, deforestation, nature and re-wilding.

● How was it interviewing Sir David Attenborough for the podcast?

He is even better than you want him to be! It will probably always be one of my proudest achievements and proudest moments. He was just amazing, he really listened and was so insightful and hopeful, while also really addressing the severity of the situation. It was just everything that I wanted the conversation to be. It really does feel like the perfect place to start our podcast and I'm really buzzing about it. I'm quite honest and open in it as well; you can hear how nervous I am at the start of the podcast. I read a little letter that I wrote and I wanted to read to him as kind of a thank you for being one of my greatest inspirations.

● Are you hoping to follow in his footsteps with your work for WWF?

No-one is ever going to come close to being as incredible as David Attenborough has been for everyone. But I think, very much, I would like to try to carry on his legacy. If I can emulate [copy] a tiny bit of what he has done in his career, and if that tiny contribution is my life's work, then that will be everything. It felt a little bit like that in our conversation, a bit like he was saying that it really is over to the young people to lead this fight and bring about this change. I think he is saying that to us all. He has more than done his bit and he is saying now it is our turn, what are we going to do?



WWF

CONNECT WITH NATURE

ACTOR and WWF ambassador Cel Spellman has launched a new podcast where he talks about our planet. Each episode Cel will be joined by a special guest, including the legendary Sir David Attenborough! We caught up with Cel to talk podcasts, the planet and interviewing Sir David.

● What everyday things do you think we can do?

The first thing I always tell people is to get back out there and go and reconnect with nature and the natural world that's around you. Once you have that connection, that breeds an interest and you maybe want to learn more or go out and help – maybe an animal that you saw in your local nature reserve, or maybe to re-wild some green spaces. Then I think looking at where we are spending money. Rather than spending £3 on a T-shirt from an online shop, visit the charity shop in your local town centre. That's a great way to make your spending more ethical. Also, your voice is massive. We all have one and it is something we can actually use. Whether it's how we spend our money or going and speaking to your local MP, signing that petition that is going to be shared in the House of Commons or all around the world. If you're not happy about something, tell the company and let them know that you're not happy about it. You don't know if you are going to be that one last voice, that one final signature that brings change. Then finally just being a bit more conscious about what you eat and the impact that you are having on the planet.

● Do you think the last year has helped us all remember the importance of nature?

Gosh, yeah. We're not going to actually realise the full effect until we are really out the other side of it. I think it's going to be a fascinating case study – when the big machines stop, look how quickly nature can bounce back. The air pollution drops and suddenly you're hearing loads more birds in the garden. I think people have really turned to nature as a refuge and a bit of respite [a rest], and I think so many people have found places on their doorstep that they didn't know were there before. I think it really has opened people's eyes and ears to it and, in turn, made them realise that there is a lot more out there that is worth protecting and worth fighting for. It's quite sad that humans have just had this wilful nature of destroying it without a care in the world. I just hope that we don't forget it. Nature does so much for us and we really all do rely on it, so let's all care for it that little bit more.

● You always say children are the ones who will make the changes that save our planet. When did you decide you wanted to make a change?

I think when I first reached out to WWF I was around 15 or 16. I was frustrated because I read about the planet heating up, yet we weren't doing anything about it. I didn't understand it and I think that is a feeling that a lot of young people feel, except now they're even more frustrated and they're even more angry. Around that time I was also on CBBC. I had a good connection with young people, so I wanted to use that to help communicate with them about the climate. That's the point where I emailed WWF. I realised I wanted to do what I could. I was very fortunate that I was on CBBC, but I think I would have done the same even if I hadn't been. I would have just found other ways to go and do it!



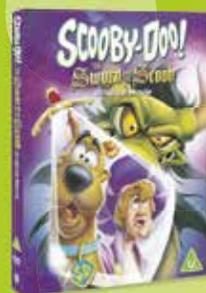
Call of the Wild is available now from all of your usual podcast providers

CHARITIES SUPPORTED BY FIRST NEWS



WIN! SCOOPY-DOO! DVDs

CAN you spot the five changes we've made to this picture from *Scooby-Doo! The Sword and the Scoob*? Send in your answers and four lucky winners will win a copy of the DVD. Take a journey back in time to King Arthur's court in this legendary saga of wizards, knights, dragons... and Scooby-Doo! An evil sorceress tries to seize power in Camelot, so King Arthur needs the help of our favourite super sleuths to save his throne. But will their valiant efforts only make things royally worse?



Scooby-Doo! The Sword and the Scoob is available now on DVD and digital download.



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WORDSEARCH

WHERE ON EARTH?

CAN you find the words in our Roald Dahl-themed wordsearch? Remember that the words can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

CAN you guess which country these are all associated with?

L K B N Y C P B G D R J E S O Z K R E E W N P N G X N H
 X D L R M W P C B N Z R L I G D B A A K O R D O I C L K
 M V Y W M K R Y C D Y A X V R B Z X S T N Y W V L A R B
 I S G N I J B N X O D F Q S X D O R Q V N Z W P D M J N
 S J F C L L X T Z U F A E R M A Y T M J M I G G L I L C
 S Z P T R A L F S U J P R B W M Y R K K T T Y Q X S X H
 T Q C G Y B D Y S X T L H U F X M O M V S G W L A S E A
 R P P M E I O F W A S F S B O U R D U Y Q B Y R D S D R
 U V M O E M L V Q O Q O M P R J F M O K T J R N M P T L
 N L A P Q D G I K J N A P Z B B O T P N E V O U R I Z I
 C X T F O L Q W Z B R K J H Z Q X O H O V I H E E D L E
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 L Q Q N L Q K Y A S C T I U J G M F O A I T K T E G Z E
 I D B N Q F N F H O U L E T H E T W I T S D K C B X I T
 W I U A C V P G P L C V L F T V I O O C E M D U F C D H
 P Y V H K S S F X B Q M K O O O Y W V W Z Y K Z G S K R
 N X D V E O Y L Q O L J A M E S P W A A B H T M N B F K
 F S Y R V R P V W H B V I P O I J Z G C M O M D I B J N
 S G G E O R G E K R A N K Y J Y L U J I R R I N S J R H



- Willy Wonka
- Matilda
- The BFG
- Charlie Bucket
- Miss Trunchbull
- Danny
- Sophie
- George Kranky
- Mr Fox
- James
- Miss Spider
- The Twits

COMPETITIONS: You can enter First News competitions in one of two ways. 1. Go to firstnews.co.uk/competitions and follow the instructions. 2. Email us at win@firstnews.co.uk putting 'competition name' (e.g., Holiday), in the subject box. Please note: First News will not share your personal details with third parties. First News will only use your details to contact the competition winners. First News competitions are only open to those aged 17-and-under and residents of the UK & Republic of Ireland, except employees of First News, First Group Enterprises Ltd, Reach plc and any associated companies and their families. Winners will be the first correct entries drawn after the closing dates. No purchase necessary. No responsibility can be accepted for entries that have been lost or damaged in transit. First News will not enter into any correspondence. All winners will be notified accordingly and their names and location will be available on request. No cash alternative for any prizes will be offered. The winner may be required to partake in media activity relating to the competition.

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS:

Spot the difference: Robin's head is bigger, Joel's jacket is now pink, badge is missing from Badger, Dragon is missing a tooth, extra light in front of the stage. **Word wheel:** tradition. **Word ladder:** ears, cars, cabs, labs, lobs, lobe. **Where on Earth?:** Malta.

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REECE'S RECIPES

TOP TIP!
Don't forget to add flavour. Flavour is everything!

Junior Bake Off champion Reece shares another delicious recipe with us. This week it's lemon slices! Don't forget to share pictures of your bakes with us at newsdesk@firstnews.co.uk.

LEMON SLICES

Ingredients for the cake

- 250g self-raising flour
- 250g soft butter
- 4 large eggs
- 2 tbsp milk
- 250g caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

- 2 tbsp milk
- 15ml vegetable oil
- juice of a lemon
- 2 tbsp lemon zest

Ingredients for the topping

- 4 tbsp lemon curd
- 100g icing sugar
- 1-3 tbsp milk
- 2-3 drops yellow food colouring gel

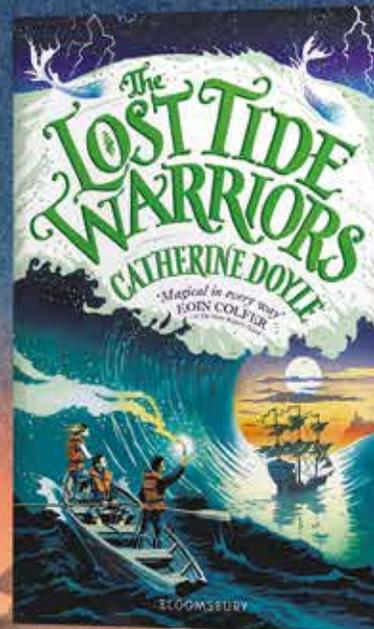
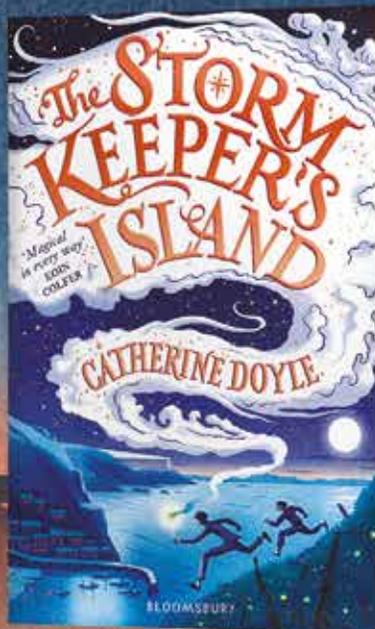
Method

1. Whip the butter and sugar until pale and fluffy
2. Add in the eggs one at a time until fully mixed
3. Add the dry ingredients, then fold until combined
4. Pour in the milk, lemon juice, lemon zest, oil and vanilla, then pour into a lined baking tray
5. Bake for 15 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean
6. Once cooked and cooled, spread over the lemon curd
7. To make the topping, place the icing sugar in a bowl and add the milk a little at a time until it turns into a thick icing
8. Take 1/3 of the icing and add the gel colour to turn it yellow
9. Pour over your white icing then drizzle your yellow icing on top
10. Using a toothpick, create swirls with the icing to make a marble effect
11. Chill for 15 minutes then slice into bars and serve

Recipe © Reece 2021

If you're inspired by Reece and fancy showing off your baking skills, then why not apply for Junior Bake Off 2021? If you're aged between 9 and 15, and can whip up a cool cake or some brilliant biscuits, then this could be your year! To apply, visit junior.take-part.co.uk, but make sure to check with a grown-up first. Entries close on 28 March 2021.

An island that never forgets.
A series you'll remember forever.



The epic finale
OUT
NOW!

'A truly epic finale to one of the best trilogies of recent years'
Kiran Millwood Hargrave

'Bursting at the seams with imagination and heartfelt humour'
Ross Montgomery

ANXIETY EXPLAINED

Anxiety is a perfectly normal biological reaction. We've had it since we were cavemen (and cavewomen) and it's a protective mechanism. Whenever it feels under threat, your body's natural defence systems kick in to prepare you either to fight whatever the threat might be, or to run away. We feel this as anxiety: you feel worried, your heart beats faster, you breathe more quickly, your stomach does funny things and you sweat like crazy. I'm sure you've felt like this before an exam, a sports match or a performance. When the so-called threat has passed, these bodily responses settle down again and you get on with life. This kind of anxiety may not feel very pleasant, but it's perfectly natural and has kept us safe for thousands of years.

However, this protective mechanism can sometimes get out of control. It may start happening more often, for no reason at all, feel more intense, or it may not settle down easily. For some people it can have a huge impact on their life. That is when anxiety becomes an issue and needs to be addressed – but the good news is that there is a lot you can do to keep it under control.



Dominic Turner

COPING WITH ANXIETY

ANXIETY is something you will have heard mentioned quite a lot recently. It's one of the more common difficulties experienced by young people – and the coronavirus has made it more of an issue. Some of us have found that lockdown made our anxiety worse, and others discovered anxious feelings when life started to slowly get back to normal. Well, the 'new normal' anyway. So why does it happen and how can you deal with it? Read on for some essential information...

YOU ARE AMAZING!

One thing about anxiety – or any other mental health difficulty – is that it can make us feel like we're doing something wrong, or that we're not good enough. Let me stop you right there!

It's completely normal to have feelings like this and it's okay. Your brain and body just need some time to adjust to everything that is going on in your life. Some of the most successful people in the world have been through challenges just like this.

Never forget that you have come this far in spite of everything you've faced – and that makes you pretty amazing!

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

If you're really struggling, with anxiety or anything else, never be scared to talk to someone or ask for help. You could speak to a friend, family member or a professional, such as a teacher, counsellor, doctor or nurse. There are lots of helplines and websites you can try for advice and information too – the NHS website is a great place to start.

Dr Ranj's new book, *How To Grow Up And Feel Amazing!*, is out now

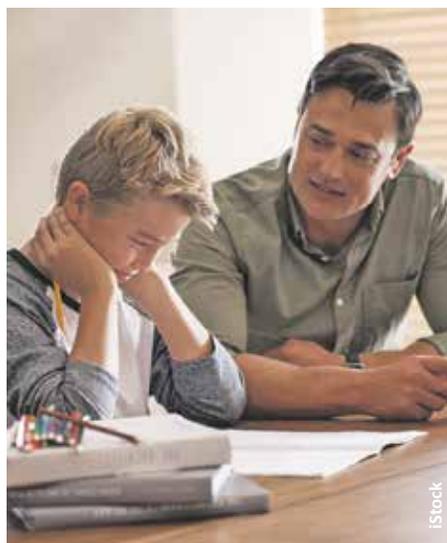


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TOP TIPS

Anxiety is something you can totally overcome. It may take time though, and some people may need help from a health professional or maybe medication to get on top of it. Here are some ways you can help yourself:

- 1 Always remind yourself that anxiety is a completely normal feeling and you're not doing anything wrong. The feelings will pass, and you can and will feel better.
- 2 If you know that certain activities, such as a particular lesson, 'trigger' your anxiety, don't avoid them – this can make things worse in the long run. Instead, try to confront them bit by bit and see if you can build up your ability to cope.
- 3 When you feel anxiety coming on, try to stay calm and distract yourself (for example, do a physical activity, listen to music, go for a walk, count to 100).
- 4 Try not to assume that the terrible thing you are imagining will actually come to pass. It may never happen! Don't forget: YOU can be the one in control of your feelings, not the other way round.
- 5 Talk to others about how you are feeling. So many of us go through similar things, and talking about it really helps.



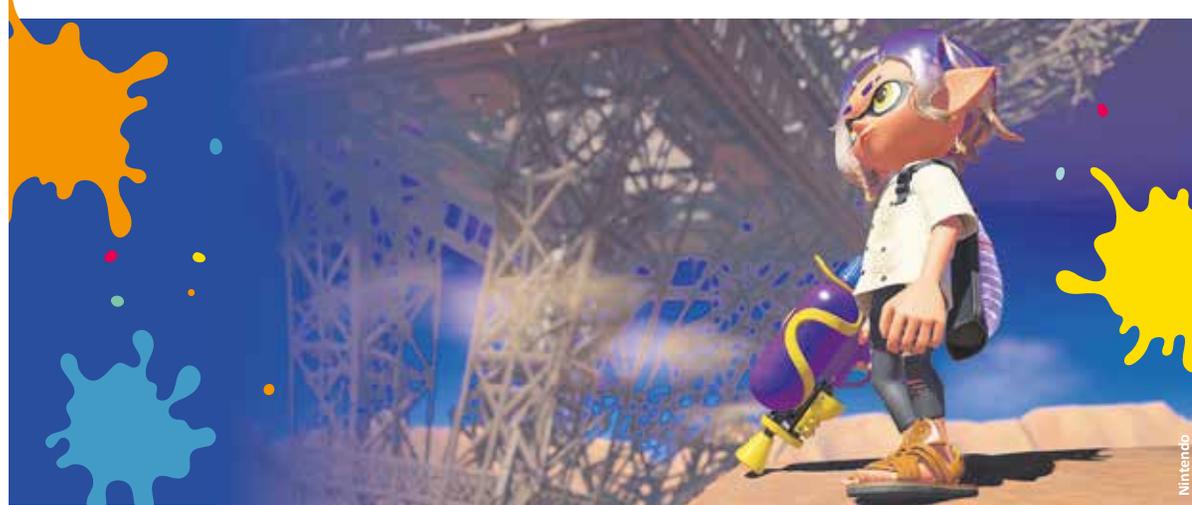
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CORONAVIRUS AND ANXIETY

Many people found that anxiety became a real issue for them due to the coronavirus. If this is something you've noticed in yourself, remember: children and young people are at the lowest risk from coronavirus, but we can all play a part in keeping each other safe.



SPLATOON 3 ANNOUNCED



NINTENDO'S fantastic squid-based shooter is getting a sequel, although we'll have to wait a while before we get to play it!

During the latest Nintendo Direct (an occasional livestream where Nintendo shows off new games coming to the Nintendo Switch), *Splatoon 3* made a surprise appearance towards the end of the showcase.

The trailer begins with an Inkling in a vast orange desert, that looks to have once been France – as in the background, the Eiffel Tower can be seen buried upside down in the sand.

Wielding a new bow-like weapon, our Inkling hero hops on a train and heads to the city.

Sadly, *Splatoon 3* won't be released until 2022, which means we've got quite a wait ahead of us.

Also in the Direct, Nintendo showed off a new

entry to the *Mario Golf* series (arriving in June), a fun Mii-based adventure game called *Miitopia* (arriving in May), an HD re-release of the Wii's cleverly motion-controlled *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* (arriving in July) and plenty more.

What are you most looking forward to?



RACING ARRIVES AT ELECTRONIC ARTS



BRITISH videogame developer Codemasters, who make some of the biggest racing games, has been bought by Electronic Arts (EA) for £850 million.

Codemasters has been behind games like *F1 2020*, *Need for Speed*, *DIRT 5* and *DIRT Rally*, and is just the latest company to have been snapped up by EA.

It's thought that the deal could lead to more big e-sports competitions, similar to the *FIFA* tournaments that EA runs.

SPARE A MINIT FOR CHARITY?

A TINY, strange little racing game has been released for PC, with all proceeds from the game going to charity.



Available for either £2.09, £7.19 or £15.49, all money spent on *Minit Fun Racer* will go to a variety of charities, starting with Doctors Without Borders and SpecialEffect.

In the game, based on the indie time-looping puzzle game *Minit*, you have to race against the clock while avoiding obstacles. It looks delightful!

FIRST NEWS HOME IHUB

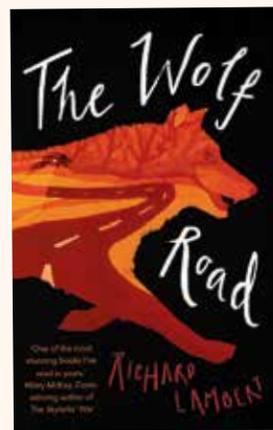
IDEAL FOR **HOMESCHOOLING**

PERFECT FOR YEAR 2 TO YEAR 8

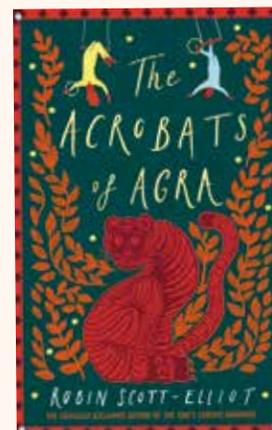


HEAD TO [FIRSTNEWS.CO.UK/HOMEIHUB](https://www.firstnews.co.uk/homeihub) TO FIND OUT MORE

MAGICAL READS



Compelling thriller picked by Times, Sunday Times, FT, Guardian as one of the best books of 2020. At the car crash that killed his parents Lucas saw a wolf. Now it's come for him.



Can three brave orphans save a starving tiger and a circus in a country at war? Sometimes you need something more than courage to survive!



It's a race against time to stop a devastating flood for Needle, Glory and their magical crow.

'The plot swirls and sparkles and keeps the reader on tenterhooks'
— Lovereading4kids

CAN YOU SMASH A BOOK RECORD?

A CHILDREN'S author and primary school teacher is attempting to pull off a mega reading record – and she wants you to have a go at one, too!

To celebrate World Book Day on 4 March, Jenny Pearson has come up with a novel idea! She's teaming up with her pupils at St Margaret's Primary School in Durham to attempt

a new world record – for the most people in an online reading video relay.

The class will read from Jenny's new book, *The Incredible Record Smashers*. Each child will take it in turns to read a section of the book – whether it be at home or in school – until they make it to the end.

That's not all – they want you to get in on the record-breaking fun, too! All you have to do is come up with your own book-themed record and see if you can smash it on World Book Day. Perhaps you could attempt to build the highest book tower, or balance the most books on your head?

Check out usborne.com/gb/recordsmashers to find out more.



Jenny is ready and raring to read!



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TOADS STOP TRAFFIC



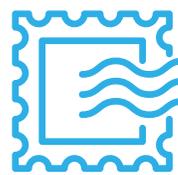
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HOW did the toad cross the road? It got all the traffic to stop!

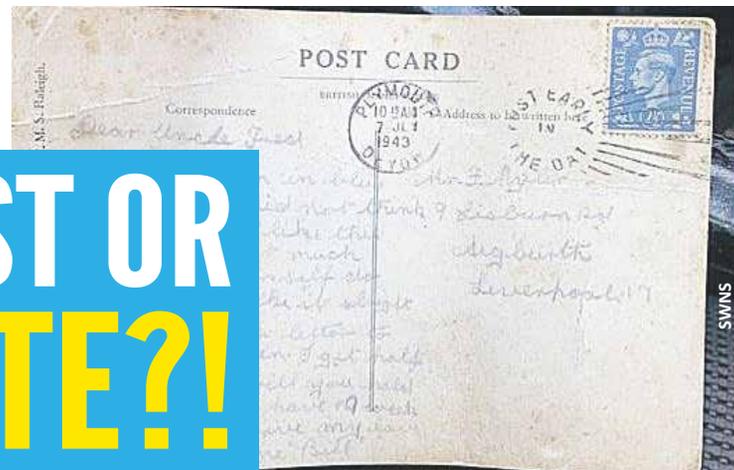
Beanford Lane in Nottinghamshire is set to close this March so that toads can safely get from one side of the road to the other.

Every year, the tiny amphibians have to hop across the lane to get to their breeding grounds. This can be very dangerous with lots of traffic about.

Thankfully, in 1999, a woman called Margaret Cooper successfully led a campaign to get the road closed temporarily to protect the toads. All these years later, the closure still comes into force every year so that the toads can go about their business.



LOST OR LATE?!



SWINS

A POSTCARD has arrived at its address a staggering 77 years after it was first sent!

The card was written by 18-year-old Bill Caldwell to his uncle Fred in Liverpool. It's dated 7 July 1943, and reveals all about Bill's first week of training as a sailor in the Royal Navy.

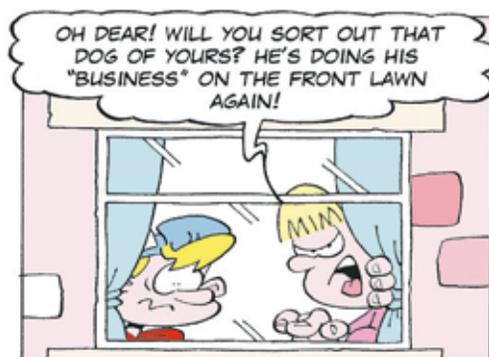
Unfortunately, the postcard lost its way and never made it to Fred,

but a family member still lives at the address. Both Bill and Fred have now passed away, but Bill's family said they really enjoyed reading the card.

The Royal Mail can't be sure what happened to the item, but believes someone might have put it back in the post recently rather than it being lost.

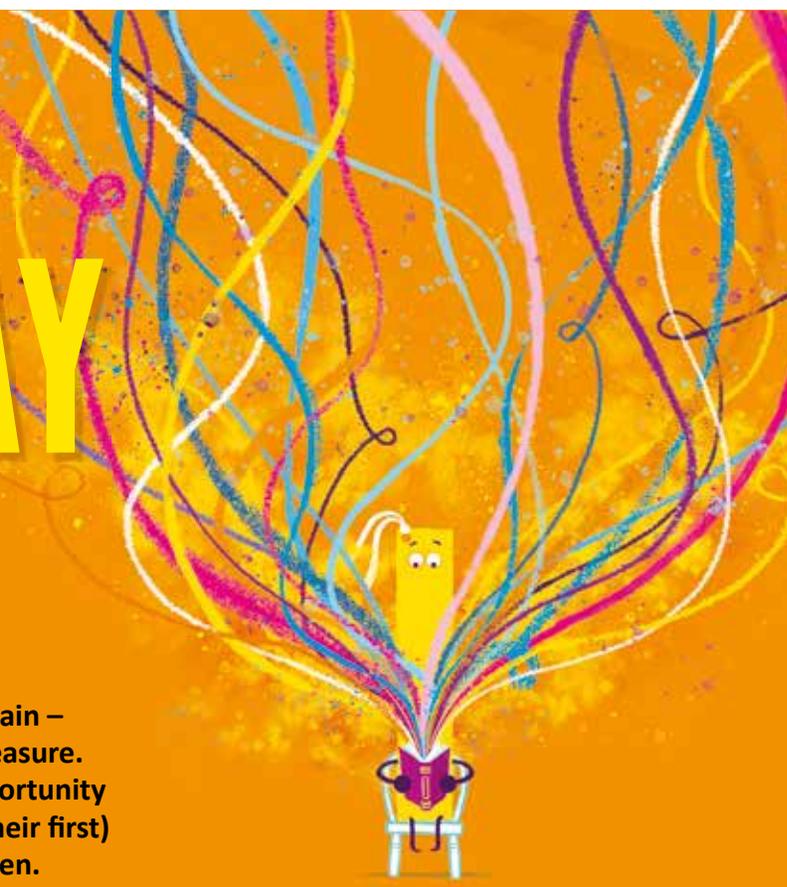


Written and illustrated by Paul Palmer



WORLD BOOK DAY IS HERE!

THAT'S right, World Book Day has arrived again – a day dedicated to promoting reading for pleasure. It offers young people across the UK the opportunity to choose a book of their own (sometimes their first) from a range of £1 books, using a free £1 token.

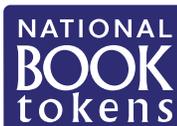


WORLD BOOK DAY

4 MARCH 2021

ILLUSTRATION Rob Biddulph

With lots of you across the UK not in school this year, World Book Day is going to be a little different. For one thing, lots of you got your £1 Book Token in *First News* last week, instead of receiving them in class.



For the first time, events hosted by the authors are being held online, and the World Book Day organisers are launching a Book Club.

Reading for pleasure can be a way to escape to another world and experience the life of someone else. So while we're mostly stuck at home, why not give it a shot?

You could 'Share a Story' by reading with someone else. Even for just ten minutes a day, sharing a story can boost your creativity and imagination – and make you feel a whole lot better!

National Literacy Trust's Virtual School Library

STEAL a moment with Katherine Rundell.

Visit the Virtual School Library from the National Literacy Trust and the Oak National Academy to read Katherine's *The Good Thieves* for free!



Katherine recommends these books:

- *High-Rise Mystery* by Sharna Jackson
- *To Liberty! The Adventures of Thomas-Alexandre Dumas* by Catherine Johnson and illustrated by Rachel Sanson
- *Charmed Life* by Diana Wynne Jones



Step inside the library this World Book Day to find tips on spending your £1 World Book Day book token. And keep an eye out for some exciting surprises, happening from 1 March.

Visit library.thenational.academy to find out more.



FOR MORE TIPS AND ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE YOUR READING, WRITING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING AT HOME, VISIT WORDSFORLIFE.ORG.UK

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR ACADEMY

A series of fun and fascinating tutorial videos from World Book Day £1 book authors and illustrators have been produced to celebrate the day.

Available now on the World Book Day YouTube channel

SHOW YOUR SHARES

We want to see you sharing a story with your family! Read along with a family member, a friend or even a pet who's in your bubble, and share it on social media.

From 1 March onwards

SHARE A STORY LIVE

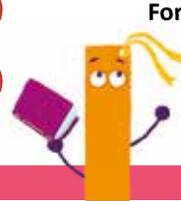
Loads of the World Book Day authors will be sharing stories over on the World Book Day YouTube channel – including Sita Brahmachari, Joseph Coelho, Jonny Duddle, Tom Fletcher, Jess French and more!

The hosts include motivational speaker Kenny Baraka, TV presenter Nigel Clarke and actor, comedian and writer Jessie Cave.

Live from 3-5 March

For the full list of events, and to sign up to the World Book Day Book Club, head to:

WORLDBOOKDAY.COM



WORLD BOOK DAY AUTHORS LOVE THEIR BIG DAY!

WE all know that World Book Day is an amazing day that helps to get books into the hands of young people across the UK – but what do the authors think of the annual event? We asked and, as you might have guessed, they're pretty big fans!

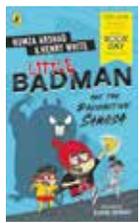


HUMZA ARSHAD AND HENRY WHITE

"We're so excited to be part of this year's World Book Day. It's such a great way of inspiring kids to love books and we're honoured to be involved. Every time we see a photo of a student dressed up as Little Badman on



World Book Day it blows us away. We can't wait to share our new story, Little Badman and the Radioactive Samosa, with as many children as possible."



LITTLE BADMAN AND THE RADIOACTIVE SAMOSA



DEREK LANDY

"I'm not letting it go to my head, the fact that this will be my second book released for World Book Day. Is it gratifying to be asked twice? Absolutely.

Is it heartening to know that countless children are clamouring for more molten drops of word-goodness? Indeed it is. But as a seasoned World Book Day contributor, I am well aware that this day isn't about me. It's about books, it's about stories, and it's about readers... and a little about me. But no more than 20 percent – 25 at the VERY most."



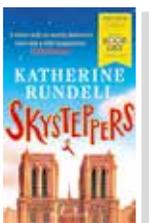
SKULDUGGERY PLEASANT: APOCALYPSE KINGS



KATHERINE RUNDELL

"I have loved World Book Day ever since I dressed up as a Moomin more than 20 years ago: it is a joy and an honour to be part of it now – part of an

effort by so many people to galvanise [encourage] and nurture a love of reading. I absolutely can't wait for children to read my WBD book; I hope it will seize them by the wrist and take them on an adventure, up and away into another world."



SKYSTEPPERS



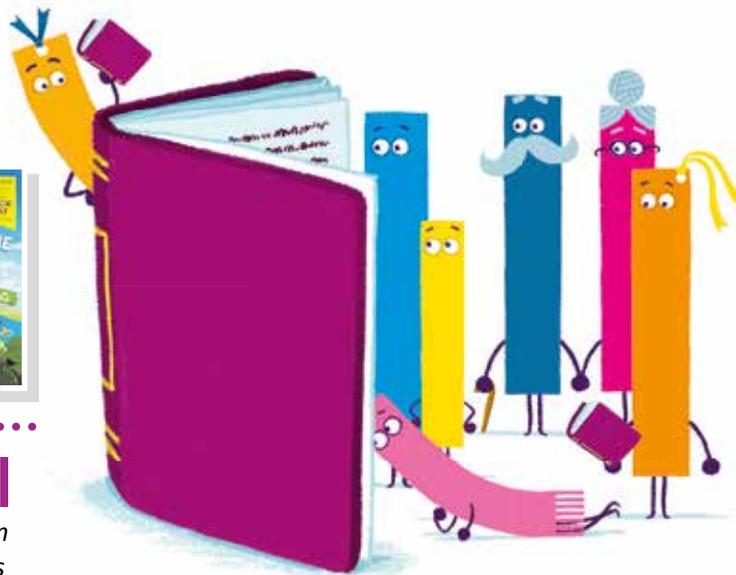
JESS FRENCH

"I still vividly remember the excitement I felt when selecting my World Book Day books

as a child. It's an incredible honour to be selected to write one myself, especially to address such a crucial and timely issue as protecting our planet."



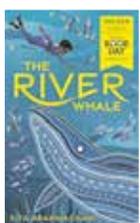
PROTECT THE PLANET



SITA BRAHMACHARI

"I am so excited to have been chosen to be among this year's World Book Day authors. I have never lived through a time

when children's lives have been so disrupted and their access to stories and learning impacted on. As I wrote The River Whale, the thought of it being made available to so many readers in need of dream time inspired and guided me. Equality is at the heart of my writing, and that these WBD stories are accessible to so many children – often being the first treasured books some children own and potentially a catalyst to a lifelong love of reading – makes my heart sing."



THE RIVER WHALE



ZANIB MIAN

"World Book Day has always been special to me and my sons, so being involved as an author for 2021 is an absolutely incredible feeling! I'm so excited

about Omar taking readers worldwide on a special, very bookish adventure, where they get to meet a goofy British Muslim family!"



PLANET OMAR: OPERATION KIND



HOLLY JACKSON

"Stories and storytelling are in everything we do; they are an intrinsic [essential] part of being human. I love that World Book Day is an entire

day dedicated to celebrating the power of stories and introducing young people to the love of reading. I am thrilled to be a part of it this year, waving the flag for thrillers!"



KILL JOY



ALEX BELLOS AND BEN LYTTLETON

"We are over the moon to be part of World Book Day 2021, the Football

School dressing room is buzzing! We will give 110 percent to make this World Book Day the best ever!"



FOOTBALL SCHOOL



WHAT'S IN THE SHOPS?

MATILDA TOTE BAG
TRUFFLESHUFFLE.CO.UK £16.99

If you've got a book habit that could beat Matilda's, then what better place to keep your favourite books than in this marvellous Matilda tote bag? With plenty of room for all those books, this delightful Quentin Blake design is a must-have for fans of Roald Dahl's little bookworm hero.



MARY POPPINS COSTUME SET
TUCLOTHING.
SAINSBURYS.CO.UK £16.00



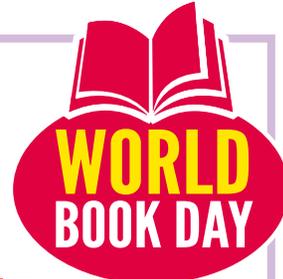
This magical Mary Poppins costume is practically perfect in every way, so you can bring your favourite book character to life. The blue dress comes with a blouse and brooch, a jacket, and a skirt with an enchanting rooftop print. It even comes with a hat on an Alice band and a little carpet bag to complete your new Mary Poppins look.

SMIFFYS ACCESSORIES KIT
ARGOS.CO.UK £6.00 EACH

These fantastic kits from Smiffys are great for easy and fun fancy dress. With a palette of face paints, applicators, headband and tail, you'll be able to pull together a



cute fancy dress outfit in no time. Choose from a tiger, lion, fox or cat.



*All prices correct at time of printing

WIN! A ROBO FISH BUNDLE FROM ZURU

PREPARE for a whale of a time with the all-new Robo Fish from ZURU.

The new ZURU Robo Fish are the most realistic robotic swimming pets ever! Drop them in water and watch them swim in five different directions and dive up to 6ft (2m) as ZURU's water-activated technology brings them to life like magic! There are six colours to collect, each with water-activated colour changing abilities!

Create an underwater spectacular for your fishy friends with the Robo Fish Tank Playset. Drop them into the fishbowl and watch them flip and dive their way through their watery wonderland! There are two exclusive fish to collect with the playset, and it also comes with Never Wet Sand to build and sculpt your own coral reef creations.

We have eight bundles, including two Robo Fish and a Fish Bowl Playset up for grabs. To be in with a chance of winning, just answer this question:



What do fish use gills for?

- a) to see underwater
- b) to balance underwater
- c) to breathe underwater

ZURU Robo Fish are available from Smyths, The Entertainer, Argos, Asda, and B&M.

ENTER NOW! MARK YOUR ENTRY FISH

firstnews.co.uk/competitions or see page 19. The closing date is 11 March 2021.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS

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www.firstnews.co.uk/subscribe

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COOKING TUTORIALS

by Sienna Cecco

DURING lockdown last year I started doing live online Italian cookery tutorials with my dad, to inspire others to get cooking and have fun with food.

The videos became really popular and we even got nominated for an award at the Manchester Food & Drink Festival Awards 2020. This inspired me to create my own cooking YouTube channel called Sienna's Cucina, where I post tutorials of my favourite Italian dishes and encourage other kids like me to learn how to cook.

I started to cook at the age of three with my Italian nonna (grandmother) and dad, who are both from Italy. I love making fresh pasta and my favourite dish is parmigiana, which is made with aubergine, mozzarella and tomato, and is a great dish for vegetarians.

Since the third lockdown was

announced in January and schools closed, me and my dad decided to bring back our weekly live tutorials to help out parents and children who are spending more time at home.

In our most recent video, we made red and green coloured pasta using beetroot and spinach. These are both superfoods and look amazing, so it was fun to make and really healthy.

I hope my videos inspire young people to give cooking a go. It is such an important life skill and it's great to know what's going into your food.

Check out Sienna's recipes on her YouTube channel, Sienna's Cucina. Please be aware of age restrictions on social media.



Sienna's fresh pasta

JUNIOR JOURNALIST

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU/YOUR SCHOOL IS UP TO

Write in to let us know what you've been up to lately! Have you been getting creative? Been for a great day out? How has the coronavirus affected your school, friends and family? Why not share your experiences with First News readers?

Email your report (including pictures) to yournews@firstnews.co.uk

Don't forget to include your name and age (and your school's name and address for school news reports). By writing in, you give consent to First News printing details and photographs of those involved in the report.

THE CAPTAIN TOM 100 CHALLENGE

by Juliette, St Faith's School

MY school created the Captain Tom 100 challenge after he very sadly died with coronavirus.

We had to pick a sport-related task, like running for 100 minutes, as Captain Tom did 100 laps of his garden.

My sports teachers joined in too. My PE teacher did 100 minutes cycling and cycled 24.35 miles [39.2km].

My netball teacher did 100 over-head passes onto the wall.

My hockey coach, who played for the England women's team, did 100 keepy-uppies on her stick with balls of different sizes, and my other hockey coach, who played for the England men's team, did 100 press-ups!

I really enjoy sport, so instead of doing just one set of 100, I actually did four: 100 hockey goals; 100 netball goals; a rowing triathlon for 100 minutes, which included a turbo trainer for an hour, a 30-minute run and a ten-minute bike



Juliette on her bike

ride; plus 100 conditioning exercises/stretches. Last year, during the first lockdown, I did a 50km run over the course of May and I raised £120 for the NHS, smashing my target of £50.

SCHOOL NEWS

LEARNING TO SIGN

by Connie Carter

LAST lockdown I learnt some sign language and have continued to, so I can keep motivated through all the lockdowns.

Over the second lockdown I have learnt all about sign language. I now know how to sign the alphabet and a rock song called *Livin' On A Prayer*.

I have really enjoyed learning this, as it's the only way for some people to communicate. I hope to learn lots more songs and words.

I check the BSL (British Sign Language) website regularly to learn more actions.

I first discovered sign language during the first lockdown with my sister, Alice. Did you know the first historical mention of BSL is a record of a wedding ceremony conducted partially in sign language in Leicester in 1576?

I would like to help more people learn sign language, so we can help those who need it. It is also just a handy skill to learn, as you never know who you will meet and when you may need it.

In the UK, there are around 150,000 British Sign Language users and 300 different types of sign language. I hope people see how important sign language is.



Connie signing the word 'friend'

JUNIOR JOURNALIST

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SPORT IN NUMBERS

8 wickets was the winning margin for England as they beat New Zealand in their one-day international match. Tammy Beaumont (below) notched up 72 runs, while captain Heather Knight made 67 not out. England finished on 181-2 while the White Ferns were bowled out for 178.



506 Barcelona league appearances have been made by Lionel Messi – a club record. The Argentinian broke Xavi's record in a 1-1 draw against Cádiz. The all-time record for La Liga appearances is held by Andoni Zubizarreta, who played 622 times for three clubs, including Barcelona.



81 points have been taken from José Mourinho's first 50 games as manager of Tottenham Hotspur. That's Mourinho's lowest points total after his first 50 matches at any club he has managed. Spurs have lost five of their last six Premier League games.



NOVAK AND NAOMI WIN DOWN UNDER

SERBIA'S Novak Djokovic and Japan's Naomi Osaka won the singles titles at the Australian Open, capping off a dramatic fortnight of tennis.



Novak Djokovic and Naomi Osaka triumphed at the first tennis Grand Slam of 2021



The first Grand Slam of the season was full of COVID-related controversy. Some Australians complained that the tennis stars were allowed in to the country while thousands of their fellow citizens have had to wait weeks to be allowed back home, due to restrictions on travel into the country. There was also an outbreak of coronavirus cases in Melbourne during the tournament, which led to fans being barred for five days.

Despite all the hullabaloo, Djokovic came out victorious after beating Russia's Daniil Medvedev 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 in the final. The Serb now has 18 Grand Slams to his name – just two short of Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer. Djokovic has won nine Aussie Opens dating back to 2008.

In the women's tournament, Naomi Osaka took home her second Australian title and fourth Grand Slam overall. Osaka, who has never lost a major final, sealed her place as a hard-court specialist. Only three women have won more grand slam titles on hard courts – Serena Williams, Steffi Graf and Monica Seles.

In the men's wheelchair singles, Britain's Alfie Hewett lost 6-0, 4-6, 6-4 to Belgium's Joachim Gérard in the final. But Hewett triumphed in the men's doubles with fellow Brit Gordon Reid (left).



PIC OF THE WEEK



Katharina Liensberger of Austria stumbles after crossing the finish line during the second run of the women's slalom at the Alpine Ski World Championships. She became the first Austrian woman to win the slalom world title in ten years. In the men's slalom, Norway's Sebastian Foss-Solevåg won his first individual world title. Austria finished top of the medal table with eight, including five golds, followed by Switzerland with nine, of which three were golds.

