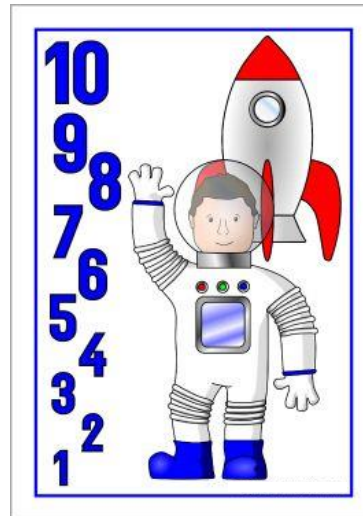
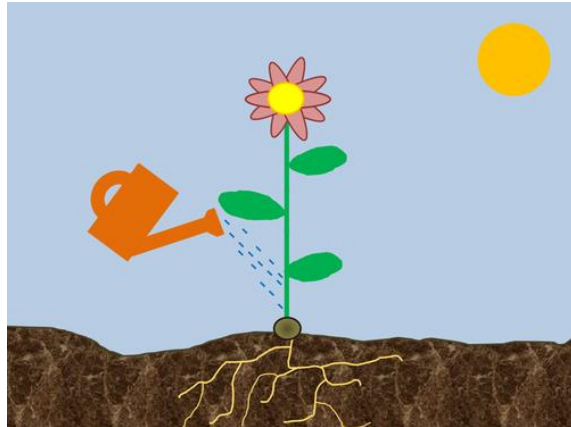


# Supporting Understanding the World at home

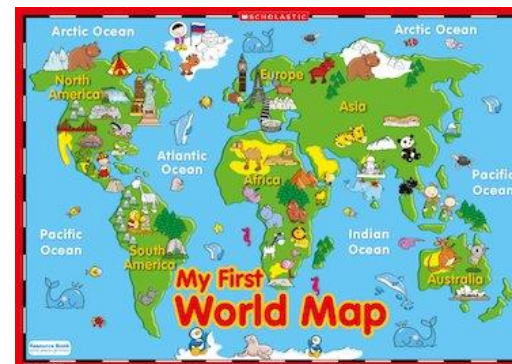


Understanding the World (UW) is one of the four Specific areas of learning in the EYFS framework. It involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment. In a nutshell, Understanding the World covers a breadth of subjects more familiarly known to adults as science, history, geography, technology and RE.



The starting point for Understanding the world is the fact that very young children find it easier to relate to and learn from **their own direct experiences** of the world, whether this is their own family, what they observe in the world around them or what they discover through play and exploration.

The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with a variety of language rich vocabulary. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.



# What can you do at home?

Rather than a list of must-do activities, you can dip in and out of these prompts and ideas based on your child's current interests and appropriate stage of development.

## Past and Present

- Get out the photo albums and talk about your family. Reminisce about past events such as holidays (bearing in mind that a four-year-old has a limited memory of the past!).
- When you've done something special, such as a day out or a family wedding, help your child to make a scrapbook or draw a picture and talk about some of the things that they recall and that they enjoyed. Encourage them to take this to school to discuss with their teacher and classmates.
- Explore your local garden or park regularly - how does what you find differ depending on the time of year and the season?
- Discuss historical characters and talk about how they were alive in a different time.
- Look at simple maps (e.g. of school, your house, the local area) and maybe even create your own.
- Talk about your childhood and share comparisons to your child's as well as how things were different. This could be toys, TV shows, hobbies, food - anything! You could ask grandparents or other family members too.
- We are incredibly lucky to live in the royal borough and be surrounded by wonderful historic places. Take a walk down the long mile to see Windsor Castle, watch the changing of the guards at 11am outside the castle itself or use your RBWM Advantage Card and go inside the castle itself for free!

## People, culture and communities

- Talk to other members of the family such as grandparents about family traditions at special times such as Christmas, Eid, Diwali and birthdays etc.
- Talk about how you may have different customs to your family friends or your child's friends, e.g. "We always go to Grandma's on Christmas Day but Sam's family stay at their house." or "We visit the temple but Jane's family go to church."
- Encourage your child to see and celebrate differences.
- Look at books or images of people from around the world to encourage discussion about similarities and differences between different cultures.
- Choose one country and explore it together, looking at recipes, location, language and culture.
- Make recipes from different cultures and discuss which country they are from. These can be very simple, e.g. lasagne from Italy or noodles from China.
- Encourage your child to think about what makes them similar and different to other children or adults they know and help them feel good about these.
- Talk about people that the children may have come across within their community such as delivery and shop staff, hairdressers, the police, the fire service, nurses, doctors and teachers.

## The natural world

- The best place to learn about the world is outside. Spend as much time as you can outside with your child, in all weathers if possible. Let them explore and investigate. Keep a weather diary and talk about changes through the day or through the year. Put a white sheet under a bush, shake the bush and look at the creatures that emerge. Talk about how they are similar and different.
- Get cooking. Your child will be able to explore concepts such as melting and find out what happens to an egg when it is boiled. Explore ice and what happens to it when you sprinkle salt or food colouring onto it. 'Ice balloons' are great fun - fill a balloon with water, freeze, then peel the balloon off and explore.
- In a room such as the kitchen, make a collection of objects made from different materials. Can your child find other objects that belong to each group? Why are these objects made from these materials? What do the materials look like and feel like? Use words such as 'shiny', 'dull', 'heavy', 'light', 'rough', 'smooth', 'hard', 'soft'.
- Explore growth and change through some planting. You could plant sunflower seeds in pots, bulbs outside, grow herbs by a window or even start a vegetable patch.
- Go on a visit to a farm, to the zoo, park, garden centre or butterfly farm to encourage talk about different kinds of animals and plants.