Chestnut Class agree that learning about the Amazon Rainforest has been one of the most exciting topics ever! We went to Wisley gardens where we looked at the plants and butterflies that live in tropical climates. These inspired lots of amazing artwork when we got back to school! We painted pictures of the rainforest in the style of the famous artist Henri Rousseau, we made clay tiles inlaid with lizards and frogs and we made batik images of animals skins focussing on the patterns and textures they have.
We learned about animal habitats and how animals have adapted to live in particular environments. We went on to explore how the destruction of the rainforest is destroying the habitats of many animals and how many are facing extinction. We looked at the reason for the deforestation and how man’s impact in the Amazon can have consequences globally.

Did you know that around 50 animal and plant species are becoming extinct every day?

Our medicine, ‘Bites are Bad’, is for curing horrible insect bites!

We learned how many rainforest plants have medicinal properties and as we were doing capacity in maths at the same time we put the two together and made some remedies of our own! We had to calculate and carefully measure each ingredient and then we created our own TV adverts to market our produce! We don’t really think Capybara spit or Tree Frog blood would heal much but we had fun!
Our Rainforest topic gave us lots of opportunities to develop our creative writing. We read 'Journey to the River Sea' by Eva Ibbotson and imagined we were Maia receiving news that we were to travel to the Amazon to live with relatives. Like Maia we were not sure we would really want to!

We felt really sorry for Maia when her friends scared her with stories of dangerous animals.

We also looked at newspaper headlines about issues affecting the rainforest and wrote our own versions of the stories. This was a great way to apply our reporting skills!
Early in the term we learned about the traditional Japanese poem, the Haiku. We had to use the correct number of syllables in each line and the theme is inspired by something in nature. The rainforest gave us lots of inspiration and we created some fantastic Haikus of our own.

The role play and debate was great fun. I really didn’t want the trees to be cut down and I’m glad our letters persuaded the council not to!

To help us understand the affects humans can have on a landscape we pretended that a company wanted to purchase an area of local woodland to clear and replant with selected trees for furniture manufacture. We visited the site to see what impact this would have and then we each took on roles to consider all the different opinions that might be expressed in such circumstances. We held a very lively debate where we shared our views and listened to those of others and we then wrote to the council to put these views in to letters of support or opposition. They were very persuasive letters!
Numeracy

The mirrors helped us to see what the reflection needed to look like but reflecting in an oblique mirror line was really difficult!

In maths we learned how to reflect shapes vertically, horizontally and obliquely.

We used coordinates to plot points on a grid and then translate them to new coordinates.

We even related this to our rainforest work as we found lots of symmetry in butterflies!
I have learned lots about reading music and playing chords this term. I think the ukulele sounds lovely when we all play together.

The ukulele is great fun but it does hurt my fingers when we do lots of strumming!

Chestnut Class are lucky enough to benefit from specialist music teaching this year from the ‘Listen2Me’ team.

In the autumn term we learned to play the violin and cello and this term we are learning the ukulele!

We have to concentrate very hard but we have made fantastic progress; we can pluck and strum, play ostinato and 4 different chords and we can sing along to tunes as we play!