

GHILGAI NEWS
SEPTEMBER 2011



Ghilgai School

Front cover: "View from the Palace" - Sophie, Class 6

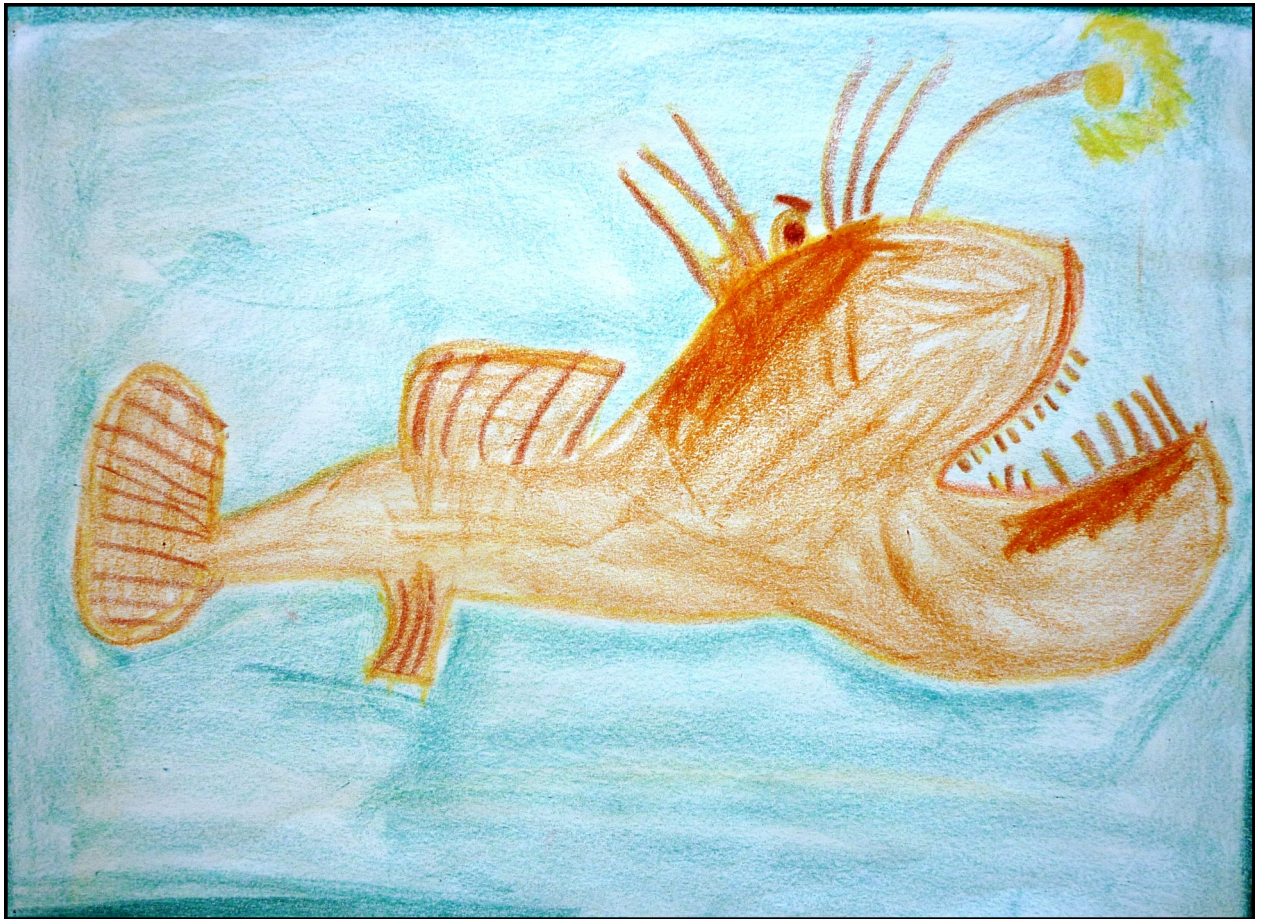


"A Snow Scene" - Antony, K/F

"Apples to share with my neighbours" - Rosalie, Class 1

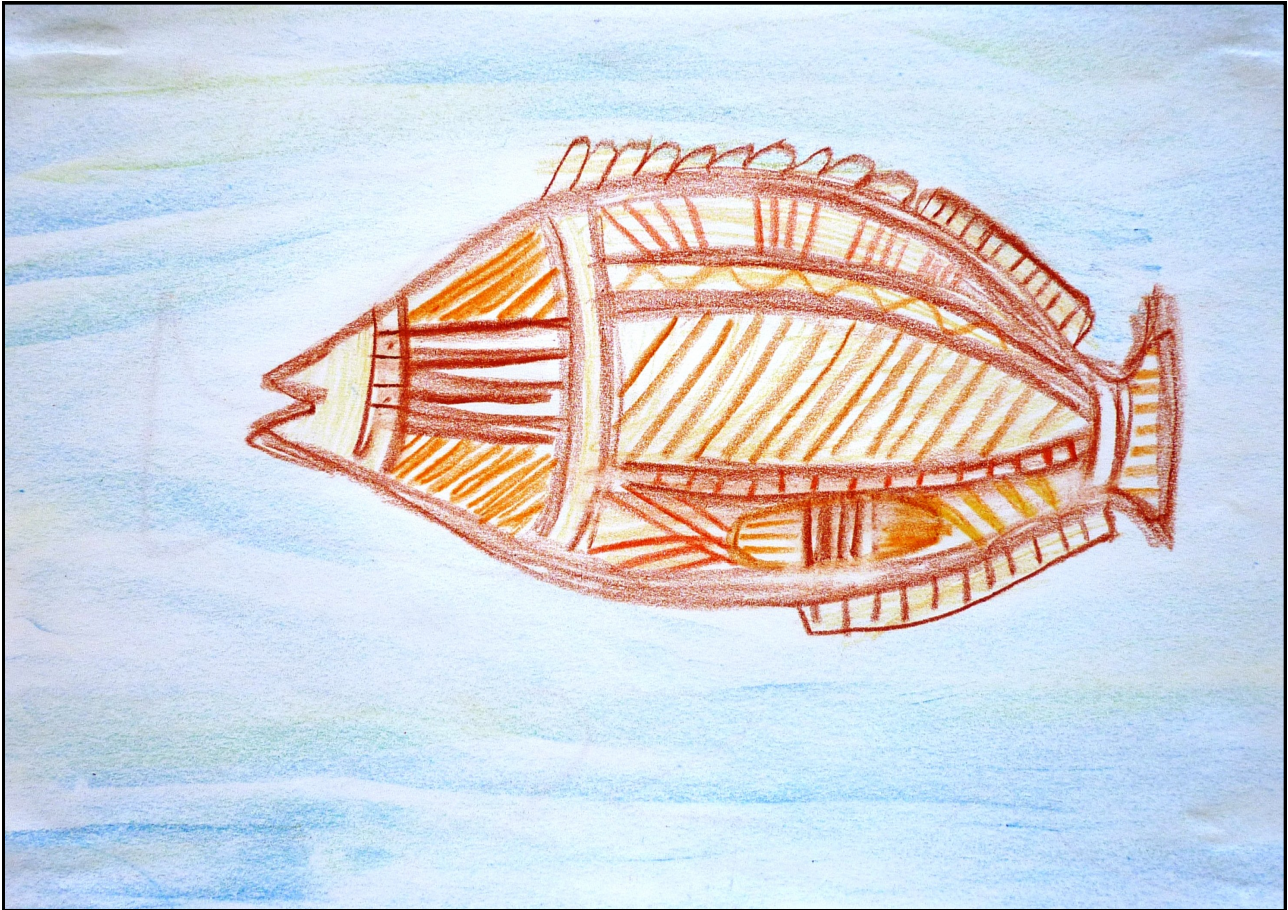


"Ocean Fish" - Cedar, Class 2



"Noah's Ark on the waters" - Zahlia, Class 3

"Barramundi" - Skye, Class 4



"The Endeavour" - Yan, Class 4

KINDERGARTEN/FOUNDERS

The circus has come to Kinder/Founders. Elephants, lions, bears have been doing their tricks. Acrobats, trapeze artists have entertained the crowd amid the comings and goings of the horses.

A number of K/F have been away sick. This gave rise for the children to set up a hospital. A hospital bed was erected. The nurse put on her leather medical bag and asked the patient to lie on the bed. She was covered with a blanket. The nurse then took out her thermometer, put it under the patient's arm and proceeded to examine the patient's throat, ears, feet; in fact, the whole body. Suitable potions and herbal medicine were made by others and given to the patient. Ambulances came and went. Fire engines were heard as well as police sirens. The whole group was involved in the scenario, helping and assisting each other. It went on and on. It was just amazing to watch; such planning, enthusiasm, co-operation and problem solving—all of the things that go to make purposeful, constructive play—all of the things that are helping to ignite and develop faculties that will be used in the children's adult lives—very pleasing to see.

Nimble fingers have been busy making root children. New skills have been learnt as the children sewed and decorated the root child's warm wrap. Each day as they were nearing completion we said a verse to them: *Root child, root child, you must sleep. Do not open your eyes to peep. In time you'll awaken and not be forsaken, so now close your eyes until you are shaken.* The children loved making these root beings. I was told by many of you that the children didn't want to stay away, in case they missed a session in making these little ones. At last the root children were all asleep and so we moved onto our next project.

Children began finger-knitting in anticipation of using these long knitted strains for something unknown. Pompoms were also being made at the same time. One day Tarquin sat there with something on her head; it looked like a hat with a pompom on it. It was a decorated hat. The children were very excited. Could they make one too!? Yes, indeed! A very simple hat with a pompom, made from hessian, with their finger knitting to attach as decoration.

All these projects have taken place during the winter months. We have learnt many seasonal poems, rhymes and songs about winter. The children have participated well. It was so fortunate that we had such a lovely day for our winter bonfire. It is always a highlight of the year.

Spring is on its way and it will be lovely to make some more things for a Spring market and get to know the village people; the miller, the baker, the flower girl

and so on.

Robert has been busy with the children jumping and skipping and of course playing their favourite games. Louise has been busy teaching the children a number of new songs and circle dances. We owe a big thanks to Shane Bell who spent a good deal of his time repainting our big brown blocks and outside staircase. Shane originally made all these things and gifted them to the kindergarten. Thanks again for your involvement. This equipment has made such a difference.

Thanks to Tarquin for all the effort, creativity and extra time given to all the children in K/F. Catherine has given her time voluntarily. It is lovely to receive all her gifts and work with the children also. Thank you also, the parents, for your great support.

Regards,
Sue

CLASS ONE

The recent warm spring days have "warmed the cockles of our hearts" and made us aware again of Earth's beauty.

Our final Main Lesson block for term three was Home Surroundings and we, in imagination, lived with a Great Tree standing by the river, home to many native creatures—kookaburra, possum, owl, bees, ants, spider, frog, burrowed under his roots, etc. This linked with our term two exploration of The River's Journey to the Sea. Many little stories to nourish wonder, foster observation of the world around us. Modelling that enhanced our sense of class community as all lovingly-made contributions enriched one another in the tableaux we created with plasticine.

Our confidence with the 26 sounds that form the foundation of our written language is near rock solid and our very fat Main Lesson book that documents them all is called joyously "26 Friends". These days there are often spicy little sentences on our blackboard, written with great care and pride. We'll shortly move into "word magic"—2 single sounds that sit together and hey presto a new sound emerges. We're also slowly becoming friends with a selection of "odd bods"—words that you can't sound out. We've also made various little books to explore sentence structure and extend word skills.

We've had a wonderful maths block with a neighbourhood theme. We shared apples, pumpkins, etc and recorded this situation in a pictorial linear way. In this

vein we experienced numerical problems that were resolved by either addition or subtraction, or by a divisive or multiplicative process. See the lovely example provided. Our treasure bags of counting stones were well used and gave the problems a reality. Soon there will be less pictorial input and our recording will be simplified and we'll begin to use the conventional mathematical signs.

Every day story time is a highlight, a communal gathering. An occasion to practice oral language, to re-member a story together, to hone listening skills—the seeds of written comprehension work in coming years.

However if I had to name the summit of our term's journey I'd do it with certainty—Recorders. What a pleasure it's been to see eager, struggling, striving, precarious little fingers seeking to cover up the holes, to watch faces aglow with accomplishment and to hear the hopeful refrain "Can we play recorders again today?"

Each day seems to have a special island of pleasure—Craft with Sarah, PE with Robert, Music with Louise, Eurythmy with Tina. Our grateful thanks to you all for each happy place!

Thus I see yet again that Steiner Education addresses head, heart and hands and nourishes the whole being. It provides strong roots for life-long learning and the development of individual potential. And as I've retravelled this well worn track through class 1 I'm grateful all over again for Ghilgai—a good watering hole in dryish country.

Love to all, Ruth

CLASS TWO

Class 2 discovered all the wonders in the story of The Celtic Dragon Myth this term. We continued our sounds, wrote even longer sentences and practiced our sentence structure too ... all based on our story. It tells of three brothers following three very different journeys. They are tested but finally they earn a peaceful life, each with the princess they find and the kingdom they each then govern.

We continued in term two with studies in Maths taken from our experience of Ghilies Market. We began with a class discussion based on produce and how it travels to the grocery shops. From here we opened up our own shop and purchased various fruits and vegetables. For all of this to happen we made our own coins after a study on coinage looking at shape, size, inscription and value. We then made our shopping lists, worked out how much we could buy and then purchased our

goods. A few of us did overspend! So we did a little trouble shooting helping each other to recount our coins.

Class 2 have continued to produce beautiful rich artwork to go with their main lesson blocks. We also blended mediums particularly using paint and crayon.

We now read aloud regularly to each other. We have continued to read the fables, we read from the main lesson books—their own writing here and also sentences are read from the blackboard.

Specialist classes are always exciting for the children. Eurythmy requires the learning of many pathways in space with different rhythmical activities with Tina. Sport with Robert has the children continuing to work as a group, a team. Music with Louise has had some wonderful dance and music combined. Sarah has the children creating with vibrant colour. Lisa has also started this term with Italian ... a very exciting language. So it is a busy week for all! I also need to thank Lyn and Michelle who provide so much help to Class 2 ... they are always there for us and do a wonderful job with caring for our class!

With best wishes from Karen

CLASS THREE

It has been a very rich term indeed. We returned from our break with great enthusiasm and began our work with the creation stories, *Genesis*. Our work together produced beautiful, rich, expressive pictorial and written work. Then came the wonderful story of Noah's ark, which will form the work for our drama play offering this year. The children produced some wonderful written works—they drafted their ideas, looked at punctuation, common words, nouns, adjectives—good descriptive sentences before the final copies were offered. Soon animals marched into the Ark two by two. Clay work has been delightful. Joseph's wonderful coat appeared next as we learnt of his life, explored colour words and using our knowledge of measure, ruled strips of stripes to create his coat.

Maths moved on very quickly from our knowledge of cubits to work with modern measure, to serial addition and subtraction, lots of tables work, and soon work with weight and capacity.

Home Surroundings has been a constant theme, from the Egyptian culture and farming techniques to our varied and different housing, how animals live, how other cultures differ from us in their housing needs. So much wonderful discussion

turned into what our dream home might be. All preparation for our next exciting assignment.

We now find ourselves in the world of the Israelites as we work on the story of Moses, "Child of the Waters", and his contribution to the needs of his people and their exodus to a better country.

It is indeed a wonderful term and made all the more so by those who accompany us each week. Robert, always the happy helper with extra sessions and sport, Julie with her wonderful craft sessions, Louise with her recorder and music work, Bev and her support to the individuals in the class. Also the Ghilgai colleagues who share their skills with us from time to time. We thank you all.

Love, Class 3 and Lisette

CLASS FOUR

Over the past term and a half Class Four have worked through three very different cultural backdrops. Early in term two the class heard the "Kalevala—Heroic Tales from Finland", which was in history usually recited in song form by travelling bards. It is the story of the hero Vainamoinen, who possessed a magical power of song, but who was also in need of companionship. His search for a bride led him from his home in Kalevala to wander the world, where he sometimes encountered destructive forces that he had to overcome for his own sake, or for the sake of all people. This story allowed us great opportunity to recite sections of it in speech, almost like the bards of old. The wonderfully diverse poetic language used in the story provided us with the chance to explore the devices of synonyms and antonyms.

Class 4 also learnt to identify parts of speech, which meant they were then able to write a "rainbow sentence", in which a different colour was used to indicate the part of speech that each word was attributed to; very interesting and colourful work.

From here Class 4 moved from the icy Norse world to the hot and (for many early settlers) hostile land of Australia, where we gained an understanding of the gifts of the Australian Aboriginal people, who have always had an ability to "read" our land—and live comfortably off it—in a way that European settlers have not been able to do. The children explored the rock painting style of the Aborigines, using crushed clay and rock from our own environment at Ghilgai, as had probably been done locally in years gone by. Thanks to Justine Dennehy for helping the class to

produce some dot paintings and sharing with us some of her experiences in Aboriginal communities around Australia. The Aborigines' ability to read the ground and surrounding environment to tell who has been where, and when, was of great interest to the children. We followed the tracks of a short man, in shoes, who had recently—perhaps the night before—run into the bush from the back of our classroom! (Who could that have been?) The class read and heard several dreamtime stories which had provided for the Aborigines an understanding of evolution; or how the world came to be as it is.

From ancient Australian history, we moved to the much more recent European discovery and settlement of Australia. Captain James Cook was given the secret task of surveying and exploring the great southern land. A brave journey, not knowing what he would encounter; Cook was a reasonable man, who was especially good at ensuring the welfare of those in his charge. On the journey was Joseph Banks, who was largely responsible for the European discovery of Australian flora and fauna. The class had the challenging task of imagining their own land as though they had not seen it before, and without any buildings or people except for a lively and healthy, but relatively small population of native Australians.

The children wrote a "scientific description" of a chosen animal and plant, which gave them a first opportunity to use nib pens and ink wells. Class 4 then followed the journey of the First Fleet. Life may have been very tough for those living in 18th Century London, but it got tougher for those convicts who were sent to Australia. Eventually these people gave us the foundation of our current society, and many of these convicts "made good" and led a happier life than they would have had they returned home. The class had many interesting discussions around life conditions and the ability to improve one's lot.

Having learnt that rations on Sydney Cove were low, and that the early settlers lived on the brink of starvation, bringing about the custom of bringing bread when one visited another home, the class was introduced to an exploration of numbers equaling less than 1: i.e. fractions. The sharing of bread led us to see how these numbers work and are useful, but that they can be deceiving too. Big numbers don't always mean "a lot"! This work was occasionally daunting, but mostly enjoyable. Beautiful patterns are discovered when fractional numbers are explored.

As I write, I am preparing to go on our first camp—along with Class 3—to Camp Oasis in Mount Evelyn, which we are really looking forward to.

Best wishes,
Paul

CLASS FIVE

Our Ancient China Main Lesson block not only gave us the opportunity to investigate the culture and the stories, but also to discover the inventions of these times that we use today—silk, gunpowder, printing press, seismograph, wheelbarrow, kite, metal plough, garden hoe.

Julie guided us to make our Indian ink and use traditional (beginners) Chinese brushwork to paint bamboo and apply a Class 5 signature seal. Thanks Julie! We also used the ink and brushes for calligraphy.

Our next block of work was Human Biology, the body systems and organs that are common to us all—babies, boys/girls, adults. What is there “under our skin”? How to care for and protect our body? An appreciation for our following block of Ancient Greece, where a prevailing attitude was “our body, our temple”, in honour of Zeus. The Ancient Greek block has seen us involved in class research, individual research and small group work to produce a class book that is representative of this era. The class devised the questions to ask a person of these times and chose the topics to be investigated.

We then met the realm of Geometry. We worked with circles and discovering many other shapes—hexagons, triangles—worked with squares, then measuring the space with Perimeter and Area.

There have been new stitches and craft skills to master in Craft with Julie. Games and challenges of co-operative effort and skills with Robert. New forms and co-ordinative work with rods in Eurythmy with Tina. New songs, recorder, reading music, playing marimbas and Kodaly Choral Festival participation with Louise. John has also developed our recorder skills during Morning Circle. Thank you to these Class 5 teachers.

We are all looking toward the seasonal change of Spring and the freshness of the Spring holidays to ready us for our final term of Class 5.

Warm regards,
Veronica

CLASS SIX

The year continues to hurry by, and the last half of Class 6 feels a bit like the home straight.

We finished off term two with three days at Weekaway camp. It was great to have the company of Class 5, and the children engaged in some fun and challenging activities in an absolutely beautiful setting. It is always a privilege to be able to watch native animals living in their natural state, and the bushland was looking amazing after all the recent rain.

Last term we also had the pleasure of having Sarah Smethurst visit us for French classes. Considering her talent for languages, the classes could easily have been in Arabic, Chinese or several other languages. The children showed terrific interest, and our four or five sessions went all too quickly. We are currently enjoying a return to Italian with Lisa MacFarlane. Our Main Lessons this term have centred on Medieval Europe—the way people of all classes lived, the rules they observed, the challenges they faced, their food, their customs, and the features of our society (quite a few) which can be traced back to this fascinating era.

We are currently looking at herbal remedies. This little block has produced some interesting discussions as well as some beautiful botanical drawings. Next week we will be moving on to more geometry work, always enjoyable, with lots of opportunity for hands on construction and precision drawing.

The class (and I) have really enjoyed our storytime segments during the last couple of terms. I have finally exhausted the school's supply of Colin Thiele novels. Although not directly linked to Class 6 studies, they reveal a great understanding of older primary/young teenage children, and, without overtly preaching, encourage children to think about some very important and topical issues, even though most were written forty odd years ago.

Thanks to Robert, Julie and Louise for their respective specialist classes, and to Tina for her Eurythmy.

Enjoy the rest of the year.

All the best,

David

THE FLOOD

As the water crashed against the Ark it shook like trees swaying in the wind. Bolts of lightning flashed every minute. Waves were roaring. Outside buckets of rain plunged down on the roof of the Ark. The animals were terrified of the raging sound outside. Suddenly the water softened and a lull came over the storm.

Tom, Class 3

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THE FLOOD

Minute by minute the storm grew heavier. The Ark rocked violently as the thunder crashed. The animals shook with fright as the Ark went through the deep flood. The flood rushed wildly, the wind grew stronger. The rain settled down and the Ark was placed on top of Mount Ararat with a thud. The animals were so happy to see the light again, and Noah said, "Go, bring more life to the Earth."

Lucca, Class 3

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THE GARDEN OF EDEN

As I entered the Garden of Eden the grass was smooth and warm, I moved along. The air was fresh with the smell of flowers, I stopped to a sweet melodious sound of birds. A flock of milky white swans flew overhead. My heart thumped with excitement just wanting to see more of this mysterious garden.

Hannah, Class 3

EVENTS AND DATES

TERM 3 ENDS	FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 16
TERM 4 BEGINS	MONDAY OCTOBER 10
SCHOOL PHOTO DAY	MONDAY OCTOBER 24
IN-SERVICE DAY **student free day**	MONDAY OCTOBER 31
MELBOURNE CUP DAY **Public Holiday**	TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1
OPEN DAY	SUNDAY NOVEMBER 20
STUDENT FREE DAY	MONDAY NOVEMBER 21
TERM 4 ENDS	THURSDAY DECEMBER 8
YEAR 7 ORIENTATION DAY	TUESDAY DECEMBER 13

Term Four Swimming

Classes 2, 3 & 4 will do a week block of swimming together, October 24-28, at Knox Leisureworks. Class 1 will also do a week block of swimming later in the term—dates to be advised. Robert

Open Day

This year Open Day falls on Sunday November 20. Parents will receive an information kit in the first week of Term 4. Those who still have Children's Tent kits are asked to return them as soon as possible to Lyn or Michelle (finished if possible). Anyone able to take and complete another kit, please see Joy (children in Class K/F, 2 and 6, phone 9728 8748) or Clytie (children in Class K/F and 6, phone 900 55191). Clytie is at Yoogali every Monday and Wednesday morning.

From the Bursar

I am pleased to report that Ghilgai was successful in obtaining a Department of Climate Grant for Solar Panels. The amount of \$54,796 has been received & expended on solar panels which have been installed on the roof of the music room.

Please note that the school has changed banks. Please ensure all future payments are made to:-Ghilgai School Ltd. Again we ask that no cash is deposited at any branch, and that you email or phone with your name, date and amount deposited via internet banking please. Cheques, money orders, postal notes and cash will be received by mail or at the school as normal. Thank you.

Bendigo Bank
BSB: 633-000
Account: 143 871 259

Roger Hollard
Ghilgai Steiner School Bursar
Ph: 9728 3996 Fax: 9728 3369

"Chinese Dragon" - Joseph, Class 5



"Chinese Dragon" - Lilli, Class 5



"Medieval Castle" - Aidan, Class 6