# YEAR SIX

Dereham Church of England Junior Academy

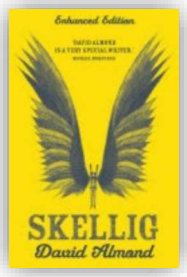
## Welcome Back


*We hope you all had a fantastic Christmas break and enjoyed some quality time with loved ones. We are excited to see what 2026 brings!*


This year sees us launch into our next topic 'Fossil Hunters' where Year 6 will become Natural Historians and scientists as they discover theories of adaptation and evolution. In our English lessons, we will be reading and writing our own biographies about the famous naturalist Charles Darwin before evolving into journalists to write articles about the recent discovery of mammoth remains. As artists, we will be practising our observational skills and using a variety of mediums to sketch fossils and ammonites. We look forward to sharing the finished pieces.

We have an incredibly busy term coming up, with two exciting trips booked and lots of events in school such as Pi Day and World Book Day, 2026 is shaping up to be a great year!

## Our Class Reader




We have introduced another new book into our Reading Spine: 'Skellig' written by David Almond. This follows our previous class reader perfectly as it was actually read by the main character in 'The Final Year' and was a huge inspiration for the author. Please do find time to discuss the story with your child.

## Booktalk!


**An unforgettable, 'unputdownable' story about strength, courage and the power of kindness to change hearts, build bridges, and even save lives.**


Written as both a novel and a graphic novel, this book tells the story of a young girl, Sara, living in German-occupied France during WW2. It follows on from the hit book 'Wonder' and is definitely worth a read.

## Important Information

**Bevan PE days**
Outdoor– Tuesday
Indoor– Friday

**Shakespeare PE Days**
Outdoor– Wednesday
Indoor– Friday

**Malala PE Days**
Outdoor– Thursday
Indoor—Tuesday

**Tabei PE Days**
Outdoor– Thursday
Indoor– Tuesday

***Homework is set and due in on a Friday.***

## Uniform Reminder

Just a couple of reminders:

- **Please ensure that children wear completely black footwear on non PE days.**
- ***Please ensure correct PE kit is worn and long hair tied back.***
- ***Normal uniform may be worn instead of a PE kit.***
- ***Children will need a change of shoes to school to go out onto the field.***

# Key dates

| | |
|---|---|
| **Parents' evenings** | ► Wednesday 11th March 3:30-7:00pm<br>► Thursday 12th March 3.30 -6:00 pm |
| **Crucial Crew Trip** | ► 12th March TBC |
| **Trip to Sainsbury Art Centre – Benin (TBC)** | ► Wednesday 25th March or Thursday 26th March TBC |
| **SATS Week** | ► Monday 11th - Thursday 14th May 2026 |
| **Sports Day** | ► Sports Day (provisional date June) |
| **PGL Residential to Caythorpe Court, Lincolnshire (PROVISIONAL)** | ► Sunday 14th - Wednesday 17th June 2026 |
| **Leavers' Assembly** | ► Tuesday 14th July - am |
| **Leavers' Party** | ► Tuesday 14th July - pm |
| **High School Transition Days** | ► Wednesday - Friday 15th - 17th July |

# Fossil Hunters Knowledge Organiser.

## What is a fossil?

A fossil is the preserved remains or traces of a dead organism. Fossils are formed through a process with multiple stages called **fossilisation**, and this takes place over many, many years.

After an animal dies, the soft parts of its body decompose. The hard parts, like the skeleton, are left behind. They become buried by small particles of rock called **sediment**.

As more layers of sediment build up on top, the sediment around the skeleton begins to compact and turn to rock.

The bones then start to be dissolved by water that passes through the rock. Minerals in the water replace the bone, leaving a **rock replica** of the original bone called a fossil.

## The conditions for fossilisation

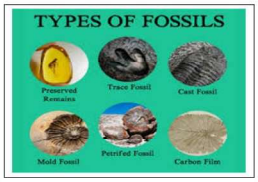
It's very rare for living things to become fossilised. After most animals die, their bodies usually rot away and

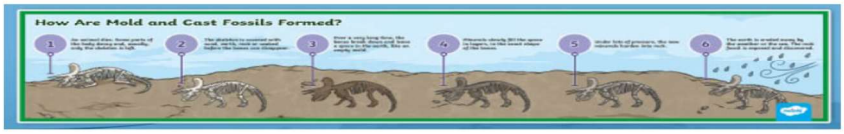
**Who was Mary Anning?**

Mary Anning was born on 21 st May 1799 and lived all her life in Lyme Regis in Dorset (England). Mary is recognised as **a pioneer in the field of palaeontology (the study of fossils) and is celebrated as the greatest fossil hunter of all time!** In 1811, at the age of 12. Mary discovered an ancient species. named Ichthyosaurus – meaning 'fish lizard'. She al so discovered a Plesiosaur skeleton (long necked sea creature) and a Pterodactyl (flying reptile). Mary died in 1847 at the age of 47.

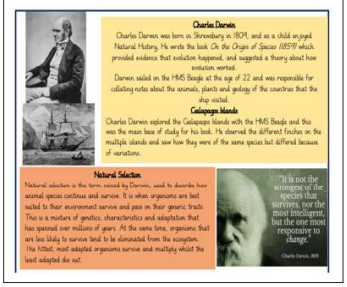
**Glossary:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Evolution** | A change over a long period of time |
| **Fossil** | The preserved remains of an organism (plant or animal) |
| **Adaptation** | The process of changing to suit a particular environment |
| **Variation** | The difference between living things within a species |
| **Inheritance** | Passing on characteristics from parent to offspring e.g. hair colour, eye colour, skin colour |
| **Species** | Organisms with similar characteristics |
| **Offspring** | The animal or plant that is produced by the reproduction of that species. |
| **Characteristic (traits)** | The distinguishing features or qualities that are specific to a species. |
| **Habitat** | Refers to a specific area or place in which particular animals and plants can live. |
| **Natural selection** | The process where living things that are better adapted to their environment tend to survive and produce more offspring |



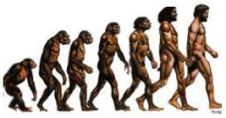




## Who was Charles Darwin?




## What is Evolution?

**Evolution** describes the gradual changes that happen in the same **species**, living in the same location, over a long time. Scientists have proof that living things are continuously evolving – even today!



## What is adaptation?

Adaptations are any physical or behavioural characteristics of an animal that help it to survive in its environment. Living things are adapted to their habitats. This means that they have special features that help them to survive. It's not just animals that are adapted to their environment, plants are too!

| Living Things | | Habitat | | Adaptive Traits |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| polar bear |  | arctic |  | Its white fur enables it to camouflage in the snow. |
| camel |  | desert |  | It has wide feet to make it easier to walk in the sand. |
| cactus |  | desert |  | It stores water in its stem. |
| toucan |  | rainforest |  | Its narrow tongue allows it to eat small fruit and insects. |

## What is Variation?

**Characteristics** are **inherited** from both parents but the way they combine creates **variations**, making the offspring unique. For example, humans may get blue eyes from our Mum, but brown hair from our Dad. The inherited characteristics can combine in different ways, which is the reason why siblings (brothers and sisters) inherit the same characteristics but are not identical to each other. Even identical twins that share the exact same combination of DNA are not 100% the same.

## What is Inheritance?

When parents have offspring, they pass on their physical **traits**. The offspring inherit their parents' qualities. This means that most offspring look like their parents but they are not identical. The offspring may take characteristics from the father, the mother or a mixture of both.