

Using Mantle of the Expert in the classroom

Why should I use Mantle of the Expert in my classroom?

- If you are considering using Mantle of the expert in your classroom, but not sure where to start, or not sure if it is right for you, this is a Mantle which I used in my own classroom and shows the impact which it had on my class.
- Mantle of the Expert has transformed the way in which I teach and how the children in my class learn. Through this approach I have seen a significant improvement in the creativity of children's writing and their enthusiasm to learn.
- This is an example of a historical Mantle I used with my class about Ernest Shackleton.





Before writing the Mantle, these are some of the things I wanted the children to learn and links to the curriculum.

The class will learn that the climate of the Antarctic is extreme, very different to the mild English conditions. In an imaginary context we will define in detail what would be required, if we were to travel to the Antarctic with Ernest Shackleton in safety.

- The class will discover, through focussed research, the Antarctic environment.
- The class will learn how to write lists using bullet points accurately.
- The children will learn to ask questions and make a persuasive argument.
- They will learn how to write a report and diary entry.
- They will write a descriptive narrative from their point of view.
- Weather and climate, survival skills, environmental features of the Antarctic, how exploration has changed



How the mantle began….

After reading an advert for explorers to join Shackleton on his expedition, he begins his quest to find funding for his ship. The sponsors will have one of the lifeboats named after them.

- Our Expert team were a team of Antarctic explorers and dog handlers on the ship and our client was Ernest Shackleton.
- We were given the commission for the team of Antarctic Explorers to venture to the Antarctic and to get funding for the trip through sponsors



Adult in Role

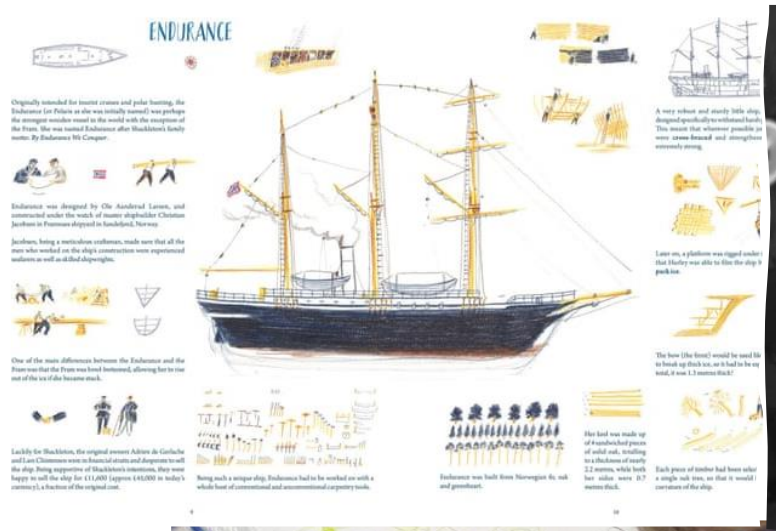
To capture the children's interest and to 'hook' them in, I began the Mantle with Adult in Role. This is done simply by introducing the concept to the children, that when I sit on the chair, I am going to become Ernest Shackleton. This does not require any resources, just simply sitting on a chair.

We meet Shackleton, he reads quote about his desire to reach the South pole.

"When I sit on this chair I am going to become the world famous explorer Ernest Shackleton" (have on the board a picture of Ernest behind me)

"*I feel strangely drawn to the mysterious south. I vow to myself that someday I will go to the region of ice and snow, and go on until I come to one of the poles of the earth, the end of the axis on which this great round ball turns"*

"Do we know much about this man? I've often wondered why he wants to go somewhere so dangerous. Shall we find out more about him?" You might want to write some of this down in your journals… Children then wrote down facts about Ernest Shackleton as he spoke.







With adult in role, Ernest Shackleton spoke to the children again….

“The task for me and my men was a daunting one and required a great deal of preparation. The plan was to sail to the Weddell Sea and land near Vahsel Bay where they would embark on a march across the continent via the South Pole.”

- Would it be good if we were to plan how the ship would look and what would be needed in the ship?
- Shall we write a list of things that would be needed on the ship?
- We wrote a list of things needed for the expedition. Looked at the design of the boat, kit needed etc (using book -Ernest Shackleton’s journey)
- Children then drew a picture of the ship and labelled each area









The next steps of our story, involved the children getting into role and dramatic play.

- If we are going to be responsible for the dogs, we are going to need to make sure they are carefully put onto the ship….
- Has anyone thought about how we could do this?...
- Is there a way we could do this safely and treating the dogs carefully?...
- Children got into role to placed the dogs on the ship.
- The expedition took place, tension was created by the ship getting stuck in ice. Could they pull the ship to safety?
- I read the narrative of the story to the children as they got into role.

“It was no use…..the crew were forced to leave the ship, stranded on a sheet of ice in the brutal Antarctic winter of 1915. With the ship eventually sinking into the depths, Shackleton and his crew now set up in camps on precarious sheets of ice.”

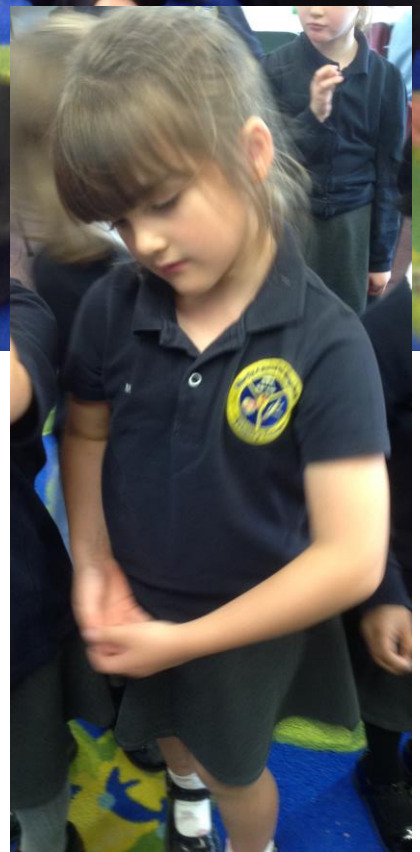
- If we are going to leave the ship, I guess we are going to need to set up a safe camp….Children then got into role and set up camp.







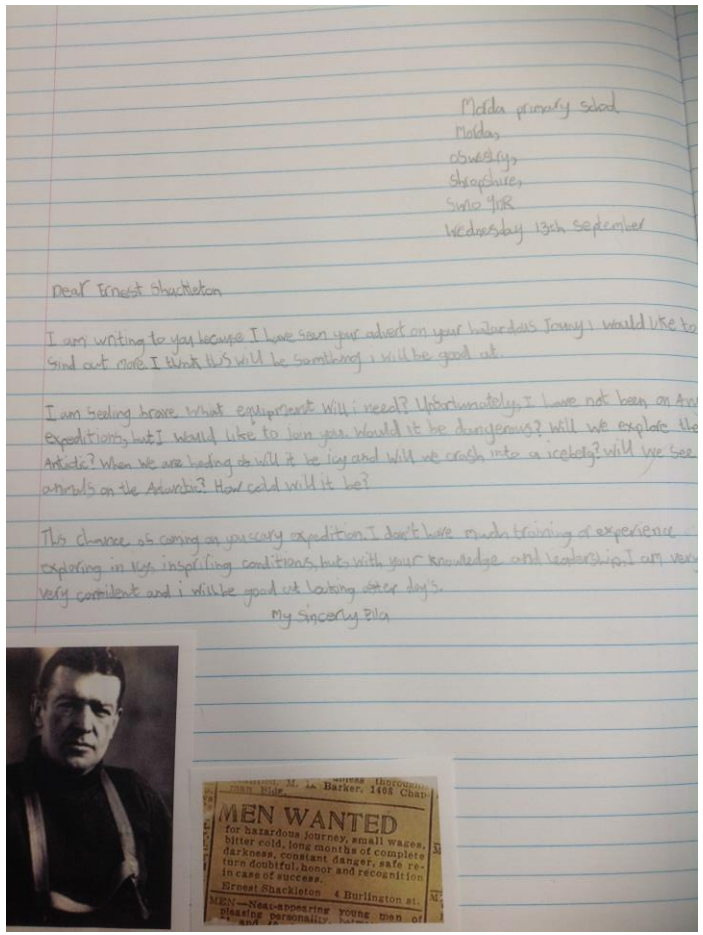


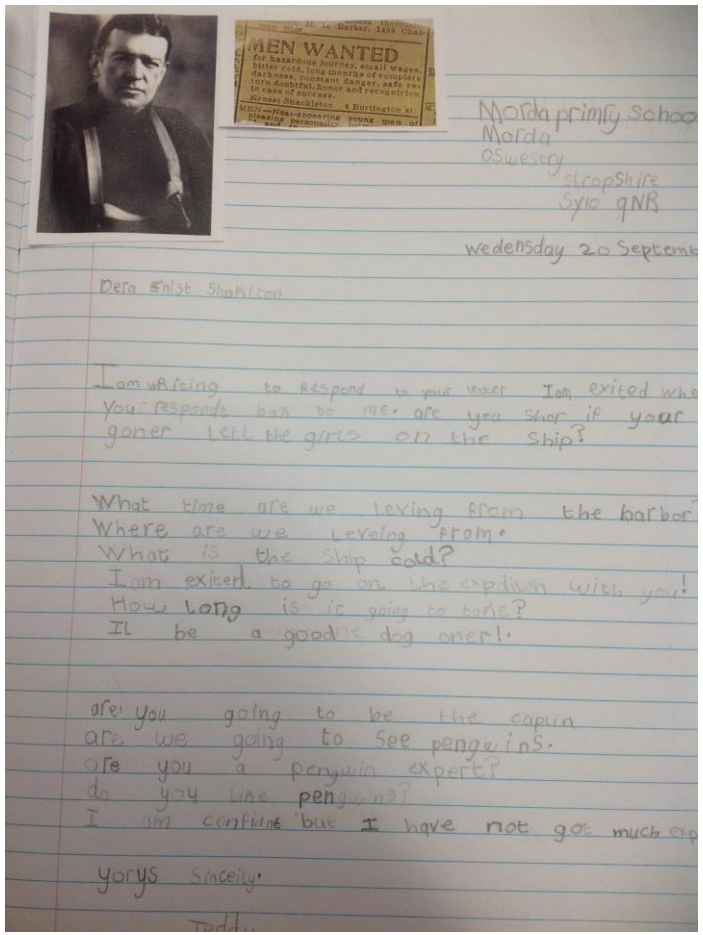


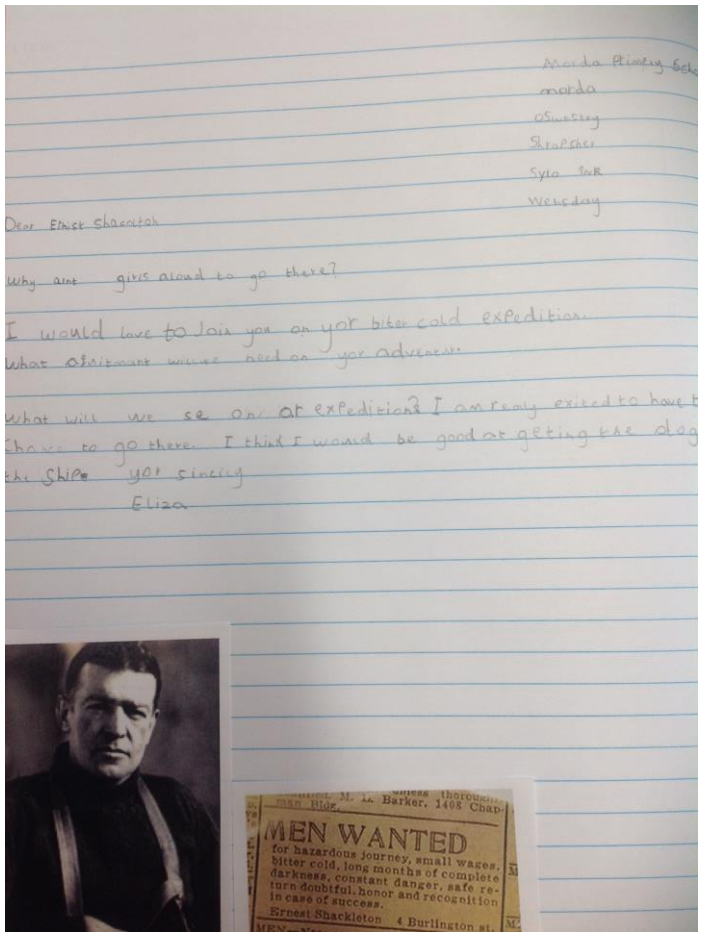
The children became completely invested in the narrative, and this was then reflected in their writing.

The impact on the children's learning

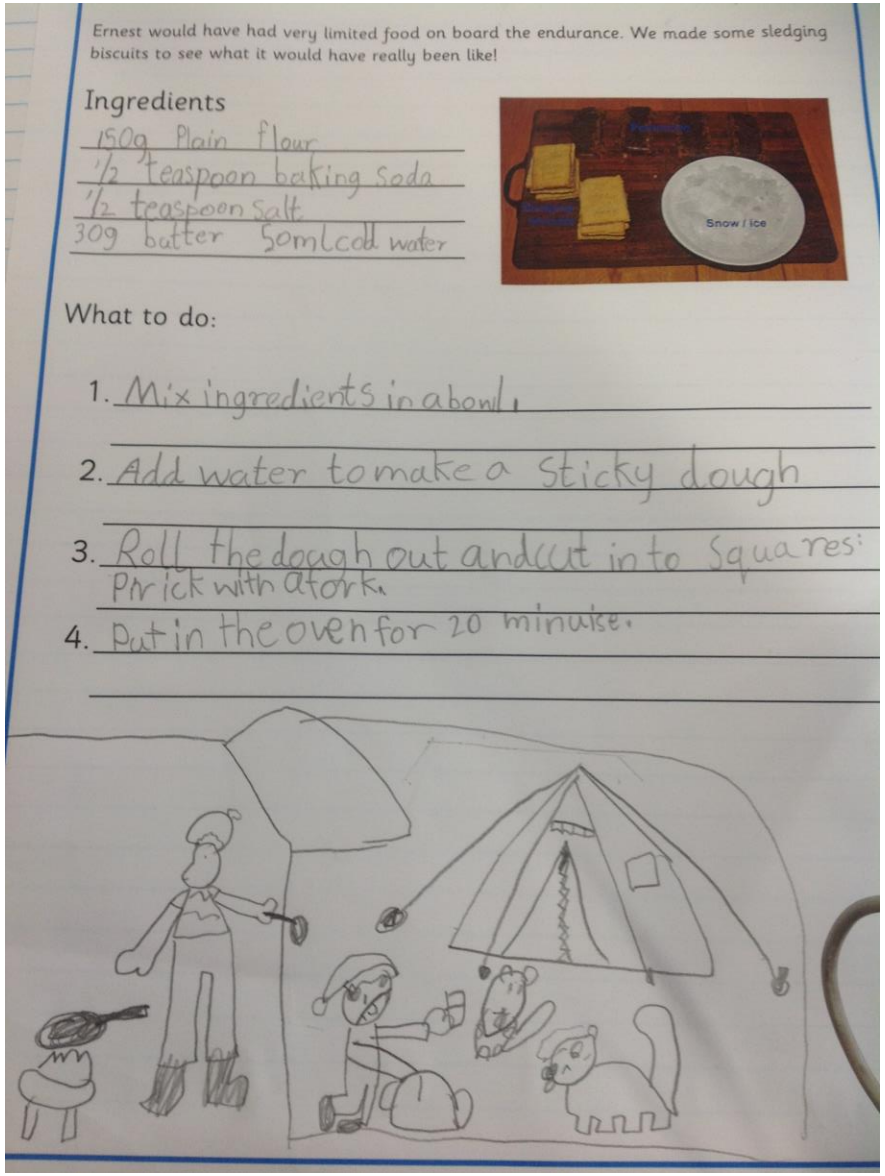
Here is some of the writing that was produced from this mantle. They have a positive growth mindset towards writing because it has a purpose, and they're invested in the narrative. Since using Mantle of the Expert, I have not had to 'persuade' or 'encourage' the children to write. There is a fantastic writing atmosphere in the classroom created by the concern and investment they have in the narrative.







Instructions on how to make sledging biscuits.



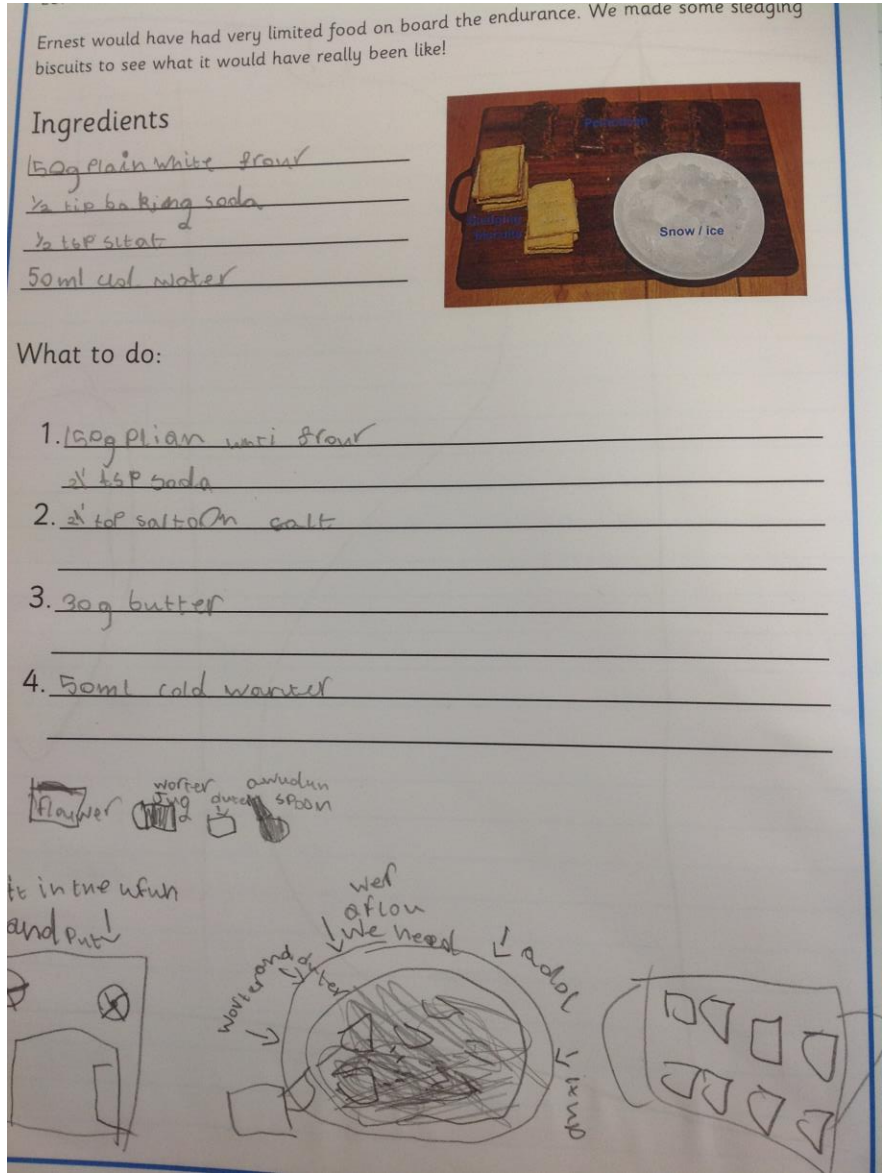
Ernest would have had very limited food on board the endurance. We made some sledging biscuits to see what it would have really been like!

Ingredients

150g Plain flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
30g butter 50ml cold water

What to do:

1. Mix ingredients in a bowl.
2. Add water to make a sticky dough
3. Roll the dough out and cut into squares: Prick with a fork.
4. Put in the oven for 20 minutes.



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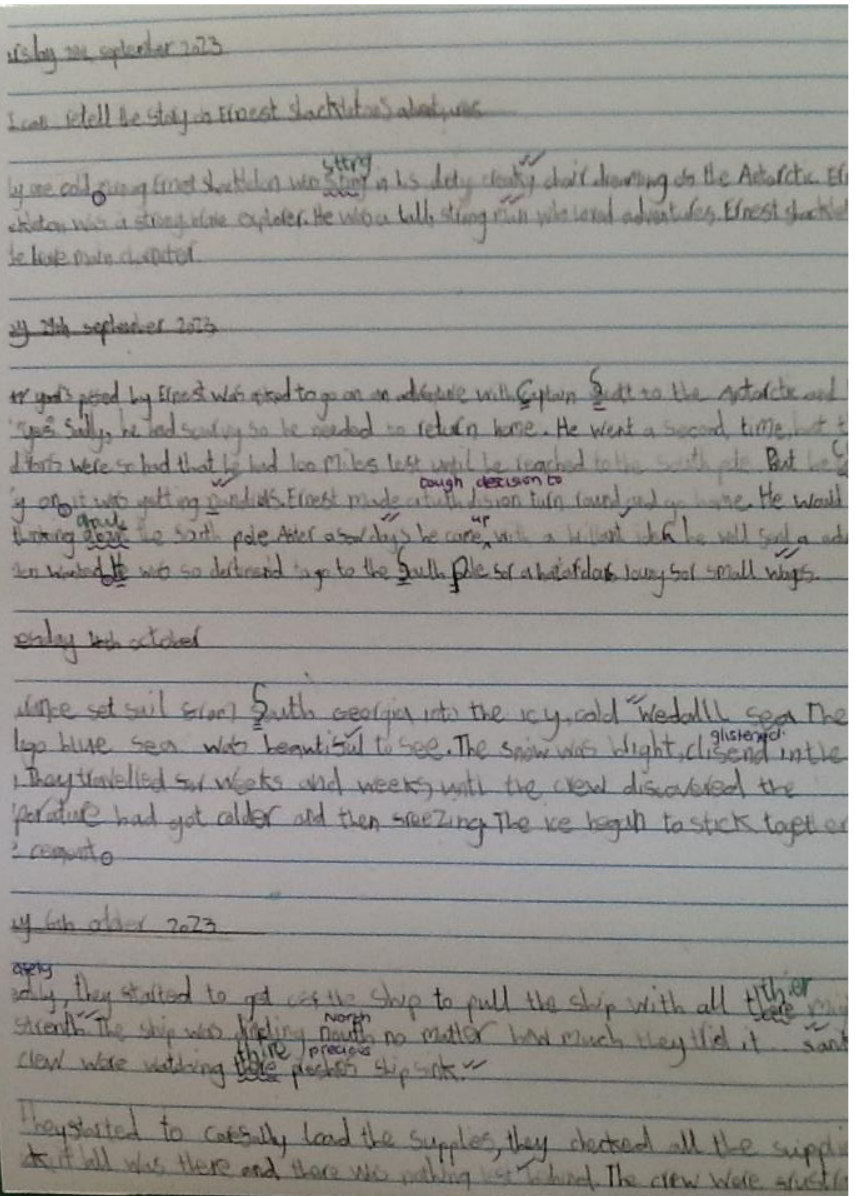
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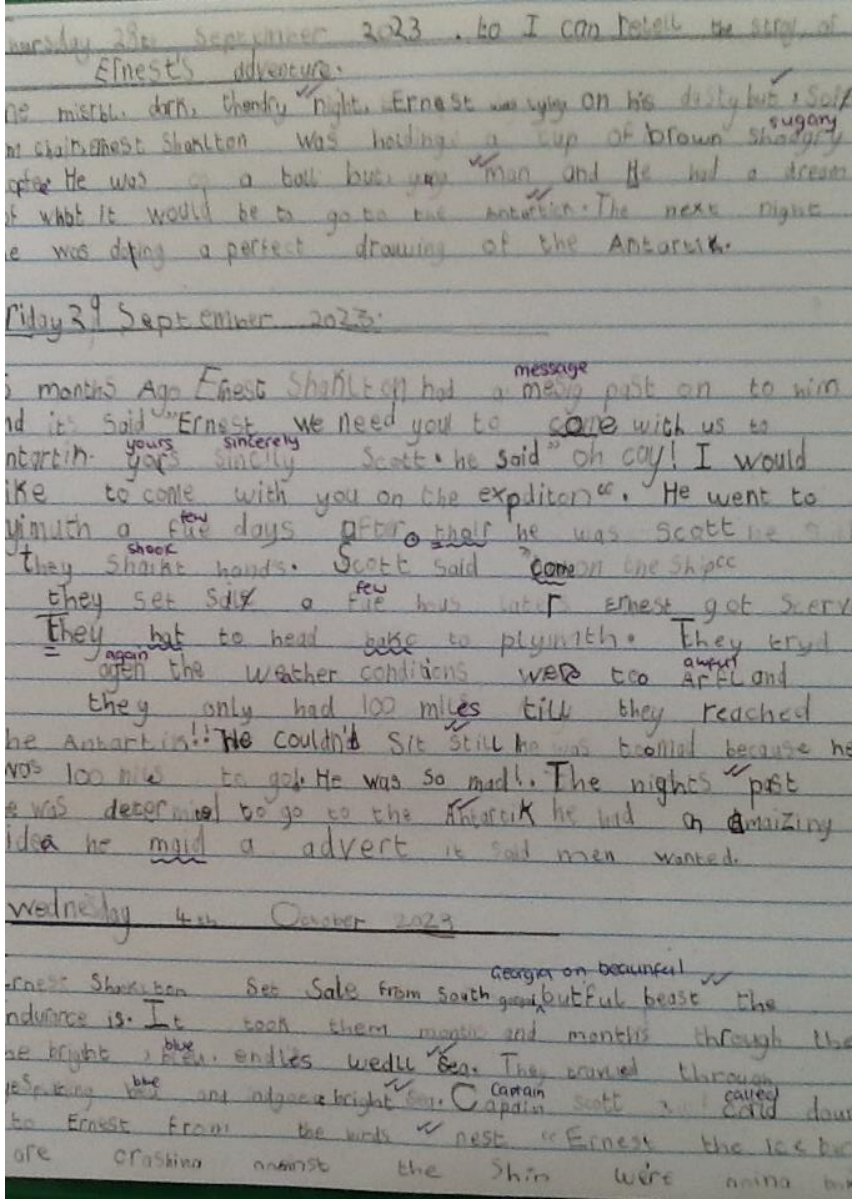
150g plain white flour
½ tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
50ml cold water

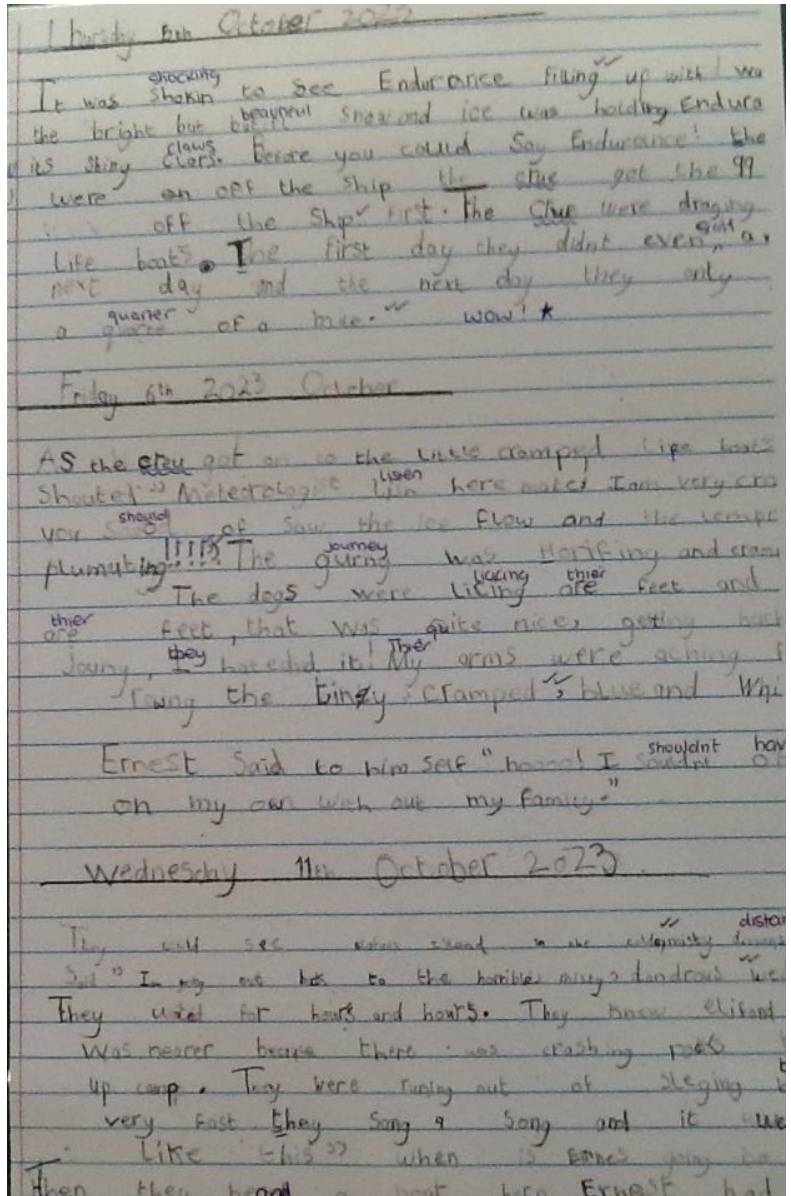
What to do:

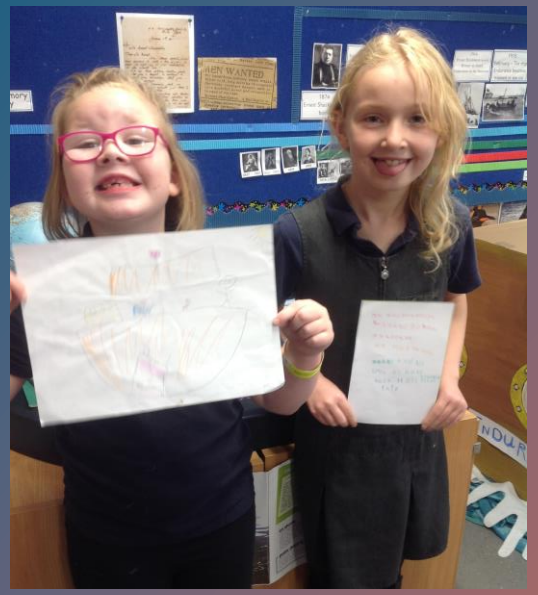
1. 150g plain white flour
½ tsp soda
2. ½ tsp salt or on salt
3. 30g butter
4. 50ml cold water

Story writing



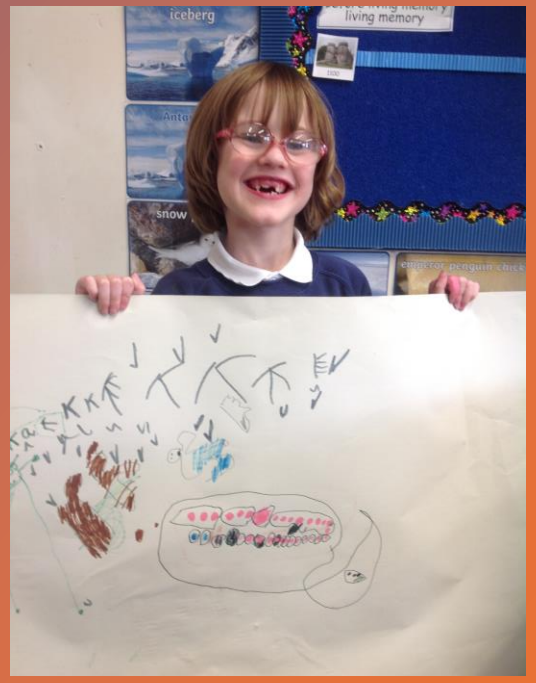












Obsession!

Through Mantle of the expert, children become ‘obsessed’ with what they learn in school and going home to do more! They want to take part in independent learning experiences in class.

What do OFSTED think.....?

When I began using Mantle of the Expert, my school were due for a full inspection. My concerns were:

What about the quality of work in books?

Evidence of learning taking place?

Will the children retain knowledge?

OFSTED recognised the work that was going on. They commented that we were leading the way with our writing and children were retaining more knowledge. Whilst in pupil voice meetings, children recalled knowledge from over a year ago, which all linked back to the mantle narratives which they had taken part in. They spoke with concern and passion about each topic.

