

This term the children in Botswana class have been learning about the Polar Explorers Robert Scott and Ernest Shackleton. They have delighted in discovering all sorts of weird and wonderful facts about Antarctica and the expeditions on the Terra Nova, Nimrod and Endurance. Did you know that Shackleton took 69 dogs, that they each had a name and each was assigned to a particular crew member? Or that a crew member called Tom Crean took his pet rabbit on board and it gave birth to a litter of 16?

The topic presented many opportunities for writing - lists of what we would pack in an explorer's rucksack, a description of a journey to Antarctica and letters of application for a place on the crew of Endurance (successful applicants were rewarded with wages of two castle points each). The children have produced some beautiful artwork including Penguin Portraits, pastel pictures of The Northern Lights and Amazing Antarctic Landscapes based on the work of the artist Nerys Levy. Their creativity was truly impressive.

Through this topic we were able to learn about perseverance and selflessness. The children were in awe of the fact that Shackleton, in spite of having his ship crushed by pack ice, managed to sail 800 miles to get help to rescue his team. All of his crew survived and eventually returned home safely.

This has been an amazing topic which has really engaged the children. We are now looking forward to learning about local heroine Grace Darling next term.

