



Science club proves learning can be fun

Little Volcanoes was created by experienced teacher Janka Mldenova and her science club classes are now being offered by the Grange Big Local project and also to local primary schools and parents.

Janka believes that in order to learn children need to be taught how to observe and explore things around them using all their senses, because the more senses involved in learning the better the understanding and lasting memory.

They should be encouraged to ask many questions and given an opportunity to verify their answers. Learning should be through hands-on activities, singing and sensory play. Almost everything around us is science and it's fascinating, providing it's taught in an interesting and fun way.

Hunger for learning

And this is what Little Volcanoes does, she says. "When I created my first ever science club for 3-5 year old children in a pre-prep school and nursery in Kensington, 14 years ago, I was told that I was being dreamy, and that children of that age cannot learn science. I proved everyone wrong," she says.

"The children were like little sponges and they learned so quickly, even very difficult science concepts. When I decided to resume my science classes again, after many years of teaching in primary or special need schools, I was delighted to see that the hunger for learning was still there. Now we offer after-school science classes, birthday par-

ties, special events and online classes to 'feed' those hungry for information."

Janka's club gives children the opportunity not only to watch someone conducting an experiment but to get involved by setting and performing fun experiments while learning a variety of interesting topics across biology, chemistry, physics, earth science, geology, ecology, and astronomy.

With funding from Grange Big Local, Janka is running a series of seven free online fun science sessions for Y1-Y4 children. Visit www.littlevolcanoes.co.uk for details.



Hands-on: Janka Mldenova



Puppet show is ready to film... from home

By Jake Eiseman-Renyard

You may recall the article 'Puppet Show Needs a Hand' where I asked for volunteers for a production two years ago. Having intended to do it as a live show, a late switch made it a filmed production at the Chocolate Factory Studios in Wood Green.

Once post-production editing (delayed by the lockdown) is completed, it will be pitched to TV and stage theatre companies and it was mentioned in a conference on sustainability at the House of Lords last year. All of this was made possible by those who volunteered.

With the latest lockdown preventing me from using another puppet to sing songs in street collections for the Whittington Hospital, their fundraising department suggested an online puppet show, viewable for donations towards the NHS.

Building on how popular the first production was, I am looking for volunteers to help with an animal puppet version of Dick Whittington, which seemed the obvious choice for

the Whittington Hospital, to be filmed from home with green screens with the characters being edited together in post-production.

If anyone reading this would like to help with the project, please contact me at jakeeisemanrenyard@gmail.com

Activities in the open air

A free creative 12-week community programme for East Finchley residents aged 55 plus is starting this month at Barnwood in Tarling Road, N2.

Organisers hope it will be a chance to meet and make new friends and to learn easy and fun crafts such as willow weaving, and making wildlife homes and feeders. Participants will be able to take part in a range of activities including light gardening, planting bulbs and story telling. Refreshments will be provided.

The sessions take place in the open space every Tuesday from 20 April. Twelve places are available. To book, call 07443 871289 or email waowcio@yahoo.com

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Try this science experiment for yourself

Here's one of the fun experiments that Janka runs as part of her Little Volcanoes sessions. The idea is to create a bubble inside a bubble, and here's how...

You will need: 250 ml warm water; 2 tablespoons washing up liquid; 1 tablespoon granulated sugar; a cup or beaker; a spoon for stirring; a pipette or straw; scissors, and a clean surface.

How to make the bubble solution

1. Pour about 250ml of warm water into the cup.
2. Add 1 tablespoon of granulated sugar to the water. Stir the solution until all of the sugar is completely dissolved.
3. Add 2 tablespoons of the washing up liquid to the water. Stir the solution gently and try not to make a lot of foam.
4. Now you can make a special bubble wand from a pipette. Use the scissors to cut off a tip from the bulb end of the pipette. You can use a straw if you don't have a pipette but the pipette would work better.

Prepare the surface

1. Clean the surface you will be using. You can use your kitchen table or other smooth surface (back of your baking tray, maybe) but make sure it is very clean (dirt or grease would prevent you from making great bubbles).
2. Use your fingers to spread some of the bubble solution onto the surface. Make a big wet circle.



Use your bubble wand

1. Dip the cut end of your bubble wand into the soap solution. It must be coated completely so you can dip even half of the wand in the solution to make sure it is not dry as this can cause popping bubbles.
2. Blow into the dry end of your bubble wand (if it is a pipette, the thin end) and hold it close to the wet surface to create a bubble hemisphere. Try to make a large bubble.
3. Dip the bubble wand in the bubble solution again and gently insert it inside the first bubble. Blow gently a second bubble on the wet surface inside the first bubble. You can make more than one bubble inside. Challenge yourself or your friends!

How to make the bubble solution stronger

If you leave the bubble solution rest for 24 hours it will be much stronger. You can cover the cup or transfer it into a bottle. The next day you will have a strong bubble solution to make amazing long lasting bubbles. Have fun!

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