

Looking forward

page 2

wall of fame

OUR WONDERFUL CONTRIBUTORS

Dear Beloved HomeCool Readers,



Phew! Finally, we've come to the end of a turbulent 2020. It's going to be strange writing 2021 in our school books! While there has been a lot to despair about in 2020, there have been things to cherish too - the kindness of strangers, the resilience of children like us, the determination of the medical community and the sheer dedication of all our teachers. And, not to forget, the birth of HomeCool Kids! What began as our Lockdown project is now growing into a platform for children, by children. We are now looking at publishing it quarterly. This way we can produce a fantastic edition without compromising our school work.

This issue is dedicated to 'Hope' and 'Kindness'! We hope, that we will soon be free from the shackles of Lockdowns and return to normal living. We hope we can all stay safe. We hope we can carry on having wonderful readers.

This issue also celebrates the festive mood. It's jam-packed with special festive stories, poems, and plenty of fun activities to keep you entertained.

The HomeCool Kids team would also like to thank everyone who has followed our journey so far and those who have given us the confidence to carry on. A special Thank You to all the fabulous children for sending us their hand-written expressions of the word 'Hope' that helped make the Cover of this issue - our youngest contributor ID (Aged 4) and X3 and X4 from India.

We are also grateful to **Mr B** and the amazing **Year 6 Prefects of Colmore Junior School** for helping to creatively present the word 'Hope' in different languages (Page 3). And last but not least, a special mention and a virtual hug to 5 year-old MR for posing for us (page 13).

Carry on being an amazing audience. We love you! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Team HomeCool Kids



X1: Leader of the pack, Wears all hats: Writer, Editor, Illustrator
AGED 12



X2: Co-Editor; Cool Cricketer; Humorous Headline Hunter; Story Weaver and Poet
AGED 10



MD: Famous Artist in Making; Fabulous Big Sister; Green-Fingered Nature Lover
AGED 10



LP: Scientific Thinker; Cool Gamer; Artistic Nature Admirer
AGED 10



LH: Brave and Daft; Loves Colouring and Writing and Music. Always Hungry
AGED 9



DJ: Loves Reading, Creative Writing and a Good Joke; Enjoys Role-playing Games with her Sisters
AGED 10



NJ: Loves Crafts and Cooking
AGED 8



LD: Loves School and Playing Football; Enjoys Home life With His Younger Sister; If Not Learning, Busy Having Fun
AGED 9



WP: Loves Reading Fantasy Books; Interested in History and Art; Minecraft Fan
AGED 10



NJN: Liverpool FC Supporter; Football Player; Loves Playing the Guitar
AGED 8



SK: Deep Thinker; Fun Ideas Generator; Animal Whisperer
AGED 11

*INITIALS HAVE BEEN USED TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT



Got a story? We would love to publish it! Get in touch with us (with your parents'/guardian's permission) at homecoolkids@gmail.com (This email account will be handled by a grown-up)

DISCLAIMER: HOMECOOL KIDS IS A MAGAZINE WRITTEN BY CHILDREN AS A CREATIVE WAY TO SHARE THEIR LOCKDOWN EXPERIENCES. ALTHOUGH IT IS COMPLETELY NON-COMMERCIAL AND NON-PROFIT, NO PART OF THIS MAGAZINE MAY BE REPRODUCED IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION.

PUBLICATION DESIGN - INDUSTRIAL MAVERICK LTD (WWW.INDUSTRIALMAVERICK.COM)

PHOTO CREDITS (UNLESS SPECIFIED): UNSPLASH AND PIXABAY

hope and Kindness

By X2

As we come
to the end of
2020, here
is my poem
dedicated
to all those
people who
have been
Kind and
given us
Hope this
year

We have Hope in different languages
7117 to be exact

But they all mean the same thing
And that's a well-known fact

We all have a mission
To spread Hope and Cheer
And in our own small way
Try to eliminate fear

We have Hope from all sides
North, South, East and West
Everyone is trying hard
Everyone is trying their best

Easter was in Lockdown
And so was Eid
Diwali too was low-key
At Christmas, we Hope, we succeed

We also have Kindness
Whatever its form
It envelopes and protects us
And has proudly become a new norm

Kindness has spread
from our head to our toes
And wherever we go
that emotion shows

So, this festive season
Let's all stay safe
and celebrate Hope and Kindness
In our own special way

When we get older
We'll tell stories of this year
The random acts of Kindness
which brought happiness and cheer

Everyone who is reading this
and everyone who is not
From the oldest person
to the tiniest tot

Everyone in their hearts
has Kindness and Cheer
From here to there
and from there to here

Cheer



Joy

KINDNESS

HOPE

hoffen

treats for kids

By NJN

Like every 8 year-old I love opening my chocolate Advent Calendar during the countdown to Christmas day. So, I came up with 'Treats for Kids' and have collected and distributed 1,144 Advent Calendars to different children's charities



24

2 8 7 22

13 5 18 10

12 17 16



1 15 12 9

On November 1st, my Mum and I raised an appeal to friends and family on social media for Advent Calendars to donate to children locally. It was a hit! I collected calendars from friends at school; people dropped them off to our house or we picked them up from people's houses. We also had some delivered directly at home by people who couldn't get to the shops because of Lockdown.

Some people donated money so I bought Advent Calendars on their behalf. One day, my Dad and I bought 120 Advent Calendars in one go from our local supermarket. Soon our local shops ran out so we had to go to other areas; I think we had all the stock!

I was originally expecting 50 calendars but in the end we collected 1,144. Amazing; our living room was filled with them!

With my parents, I dropped off the calendars to different charities. At 3food4u, I handed out Advent Calendars to the families who visited the food bank. We also gave some to the Paediatric Community Nurses team, the Haven House Children's Hospice, The Wellbeing Hub in Ilford for Barnardo's Young Carers, The Maggie Project in Newham, and the Acorn Ward at Whipps Cross Hospital (where my younger brother and I were born).

I would definitely like to continue with Treats for Kids and I am considering giving children chocolate eggs for Easter. I have also learnt how to make my own website and I've been updating my blog on www.treatsforkids.co.uk. So, please take a look!



14 19 6 3

My story when I shielded...

By LH

This year, I spent a lot of time at home as I had to shield but I have some really good memories and a beautiful garden because of that

Lockdown1 made me sad. I had to stop going to school and couldn't see my friends and family. I missed everyone but I knew we had to try and stay safe.

As I had to shield, I couldn't even go out for exercise so I spent lots of time in the garden. I grew fruits, vegetables and flowers - LOTS of sunflowers! I gave some to friends and family to cheer them up. I made rainbows for our windows and I loved clapping every Thursday for the NHS; sometimes I also banged my drum for my lovely neighbours.

On VE day we had a socially-distanced street party. I danced on the road to the Macarena song which felt a bit naughty but there were no cars so I was allowed. It was so much fun; I laughed lots.

When Lockdown1 lifted a bit, I got to go to the zoo for my birthday and we had a little family holiday to Cornwall. Being outdoors after almost 3 months felt amazing!

I wish Covid would go away. It will be good when people don't have to wear masks anymore. I miss seeing smiling faces and I miss getting hugs too.

garden giggles

- What do you call a gardener that has a beard?
Hairy Potter
- What grows in between your nose and chin?
Two-lips
- Where do roses sleep at night?
In their flowerbed
- What kind of lion never roars?
A dandelion



All photos @HomeCool





Image Courtesy Birmingham Hippodrome

Awesome Art
Van Gogh,
WOW
By MD

I was so excited for my first indoor trip since Lockdown began. Loving art, the Van Gogh exhibition was right up my street. The experience was amazing, although it was a little bit different with the adults having to wear masks and everyone being careful to keep their distance



The main exhibition was an absolute delight. It was a huge hall with many screens of assorted sizes displaying Van Gogh's quotes and paintings. There was wonderful, emotive music playing in sync with the images, capturing the mood of Van Gogh's life at that time. My favourite part of this room were the projections of the paintings on the floor. My brother and I rolled about on them, pretending we were part of the paintings. My parents loved this part of the exhibition so much we stayed for two showings.



@HomeCool

My brother and I then had photos taken in a mock-up of the painting 'Bedroom in Arles' before we went to 'The Sunflower Room'. The mirrored walls made it seem like we were surrounded by thousands of vibrant yellow sunflowers! Finally, I got to show off my artistic skills in a tutorial of how to draw 'The Starry Night'.

The whole experience was lots of fun and I learnt a lot at the same time. I would love to see more interactive exhibitions like this. I would highly recommend this to all ages because there is something for everyone.

Still a Magical Christmas

By LP

It's Christmas time! Although, it may feel a bit unusual this year, I am looking forward to the festive fun with my family



I love Christmas! We have BIG dinners with delicious **brussel sprouts** (yes, I like those, weird or not), with **scrumdidlyumptious turkey** and stuffing, and there are always yummy treats to be found and shared. We have sparkly lights both inside and out, prickly holly on the mantelpiece, and teeny tiny little bauble stars that are an annual decoration for our Christmas tree. We have Carol Services at our church, and I'm usually in them singing! It's great fun, and sometimes we even do a Christingle service. You can find out how to make them below.



Unfortunately, a lot of that isn't going to happen this year; Covid is sooooo annoying! Our official Riverside Christmas Day Service?

Nope! Not happening. Packed Carol services? No! Too many people in one room, so that wouldn't work. Big family get togethers? They can't happen either as we need to keep each other safe.

But all this doesn't mean we can't celebrate at all! The Christmas services will happen online. You can join in too on

<http://bit.ly/RiversideChurchOnline>

Our Carol services will also be in person, but in small groups, to be as Covid-safe as we can. We can still have a Christmas tree. And, on Christmas Day, we can 'meet' family on a video call.

I will miss seeing family around Christmas, and all the normal traditions that would usually happen. It's clear that Christmas isn't going to feel normal in the slightest, but I'm thankful we can still celebrate Jesus' birth - it remains my favourite time of the year!



HOW TO MAKE A Christingle

You will need:

- ◆ An orange
- ◆ Some red ribbon
- ◆ 4 cocktail sticks
- ◆ A candle (a normal one you might use for a birthday cake will work)
- ◆ 16 sweets or raisins



1. Get your orange; tie or stick some red ribbon around its diameter. If you need a grown-up to help, that's fine. The orange represents the world, and the ribbon represents Jesus' blood he shed for us

2. Get a candle and stick it in the middle of your orange. TIP: If you're using a thick candle, you might want to cut a hole in the top of the orange first. This represents Jesus, who brought light in the darkness

3. Gently stab some cocktail sticks just off the centre of your orange, about a cm deep

4. Slide 4 sweets or raisins onto your cocktail sticks. You can eat these after. Make sure the points are covered, as cocktail sticks are sharp at one end. These are the four seasons, and the fruit/sweets also are a symbol of God's creation

5. Now light the candle. Get a grown-up to do this part, as fire is dangerous. This part might be best done outside, in case you drop the Christingle on the floor

6. You can take a moment to reflect on Jesus coming into the world, as the candle burns down



Diwali 2020

Lighting Up Lockdown

By DJ & NJ

Like most celebrations this year, Diwali was very different. Although it felt a bit peculiar, we liked how technology helped bring us together to celebrate



Normally, on Diwali, we go to our grandparents house where we pray together, light Diyas and do fireworks and sparklers together. Our Grandma cooks for us all and our Mum helps her to prepare a special Indian meal with all of our favourite foods. However, this year our Grandma cooked alone and instead of sitting at her long dining table together, we ate in our separate homes.

We couldn't meet up for prayers or celebrate together as usual. We did our prayers with our family via video call, which was a memorable experience and something that we would remember. When our friends came to wish us, they could only stay for a few minutes and couldn't come inside for a cup of tea or a slice of Barfi (Indian sweets). We did fireworks and sparklers at our house, when we normally do them at our grandparents' house together with them.

Thankfully, giving and receiving gifts was one thing that stayed the same. We received a fuse bead set from our lovely parents.

Diwali is the Festival of Light and is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains all around the world. On Diwali day, we light candles called Diyas to celebrate the victory of light over darkness

Diyas are important for us on a personal level too as DJ was born a week before Diwali and was named after them. Here are some Diyas for you to decorate. Just print them out and use your sparkles, glitters and coloured stones





Smart Explorers

By LD & WP

We wanted to have lots of fun while learning about different places around the world and to make it interesting, we used Alexa to suggest us country names. Read on about our *Around the World in Lockdown* experience



WP's STORY

We chose a random country with the help of Alexa; then we found out the answers to some questions my Father

gave us. It was good to have a little bit of fun together and work as a team. We found lots of facts and drew pictures to show what the places looked like.

For my research, besides the Internet, I also used my Grandma's Encyclopedia from the 1950's. Although the book is old, some things in the book are still relevant today. My favorite place was Rhine Valley in Germany.

As I'm very interested in Geography and History, I loved this homeschooling work and one day I would like to be an archaeologist. It felt really nice to work with my Father and LD.

We had a lot of fun doing the projects and I hope we can do another thing like this soon.



@HomeCool

@HomeCool



LD's STORY

During Lockdown1, as part of our homeschooling, we asked Alexa to name us a country and we would then find out facts about it based on the questions that WP's Father wrote down for us. For example, if Alexa gave us Serbia; WP's Father would set us 5-6 questions about it. We would then have a week to research the questions and write them down and draw pictures. At the end of the week, we had a video call to share our work with each other.

We took it in turns to choose a country. It was fun to find out all the interesting facts about different countries. My favourite country was Liberia. Sometimes, Alexa would make me laugh as it would keep giving me colours not countries!

Sometimes, we also researched other interesting topics like 'rubber' and 'insects' which was also fun. I enjoyed doing this with WP and also the video calls that followed to share the facts.

funFACT

**LIBERIA WAS
FOUNDED BY FREE
PEOPLE OF COLOUR
FROM THE US
IN 1822**

QUIZ

1. Which are the only two countries in the world that have a square flag?
2. Which country is also a continent?

1. SWITZERLAND AND THE VATICAN CITY
2. AUSTRALIA

Pet Musings
Marvellous

MOLLY

By SK

page
10

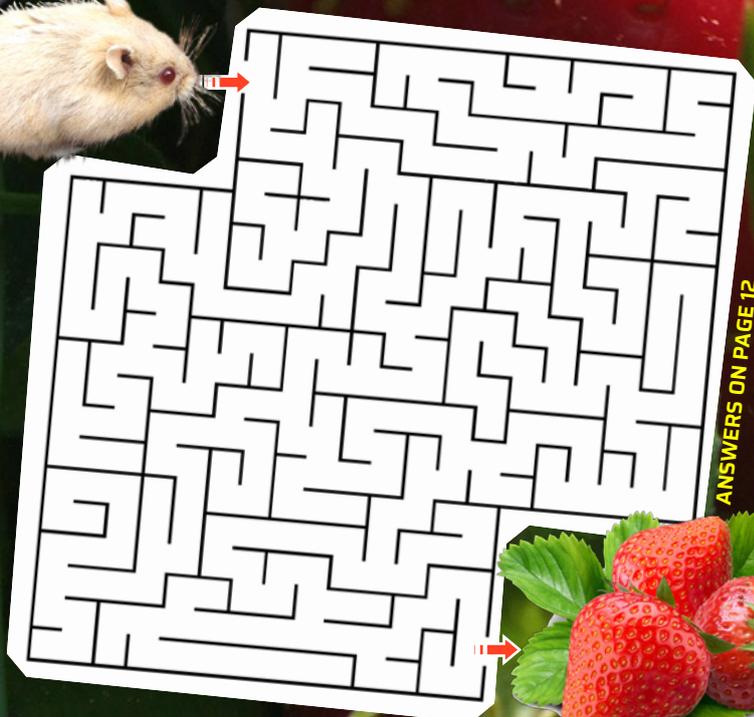
In Issue 2 of the magazine, I wrote about how my hamsters – Molly and Snowy – must be feeling under Lockdown. As we adjust to a new 'normal', it looks like our pets are having to adjust too, but sometimes they can be the inspiration we need when we feel low

What a year we have had! As Molly and Snowy have grown, they have started to squabble and fight. Therefore, we had to split them into two separate cages. They relished their own space and peace. It reminded me of when my Dad decided to stop sharing the office space in our loft with my Mum - she was always on phone calls - during Lockdown and moved downstairs for some peace. The novelty had definitely worn off!

A couple of months later, we had some very sad news - Snowy unfortunately passed away. Her companion, Molly, became withdrawn and rarely came out of her sheltered spaces. It was almost as if she was depressed and grieving, and we were worried for her.

After a couple of weeks though, Molly came out of her little hole of sadness. This cheered us up too. She started to exercise more and became curious and adventurous again. It's like she has a new lease of life. She is an inspiration to all of us because of her zest for life, her energy, curiosity and peaceful nature. She will turn two this week and we wish her many happy returns.

MOLLY
loves
strawberries
CAN YOU HELP?



ANSWERS ON PAGE 12



Thank You

Teachers

Teaching Everywhere

By X2

page
11



Dear Teachers, a heartfelt thank you from X2 (on behalf of HomeCool Kids) for educating us through this difficult year!

*Teachers, teachers
you are the best
You've worked this year
without a rest*

*You've been cool
teaching us at school
You've not let us down
working without a frown*

*We love you
for keeping us safe
You've done your job
with warmth and grace*

*Thank you for not
letting our minds rot
A E I O U
a lot*

*We know this year
has been a struggle for all
But all of you have stood
proud and tall*

*We've been back at school
for four months now
And for all your hard work
please take a bow*

*As this difficult year
comes to a close
In our minds
you are all heroes*

*Teachers, teachers
everywhere
Enjoy your rest
thank you for being there*



Relax & Enjoy

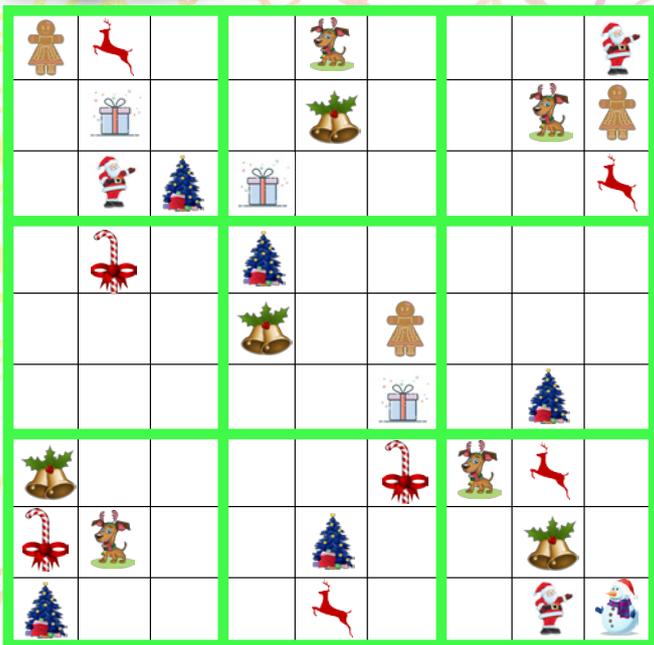
Pandemic Puzzles

Now it's time for some fun!

Words of 2020



CAN YOU CRACK THIS PICTURE
Sudoku?



The world changed in 2020 and with it came a new set of words which became common usage. Can you find the 28 words in the grid below which you may have used more often, or even for the first time, in 2020?

- Pandemic
- Covid
- Workfromhome
- Lockdown
- Staysafe
- Bubble
- Schoolclosure
- Keyworker
- Furlough
- Coronavirus
- Facemask
- PPE
- NHS
- Reopening
- Videocalling
- SocialDistancing
- Testing
- Testandtrace
- Positive
- Negative
- Vaccine
- Rainbow
- Homeschooling

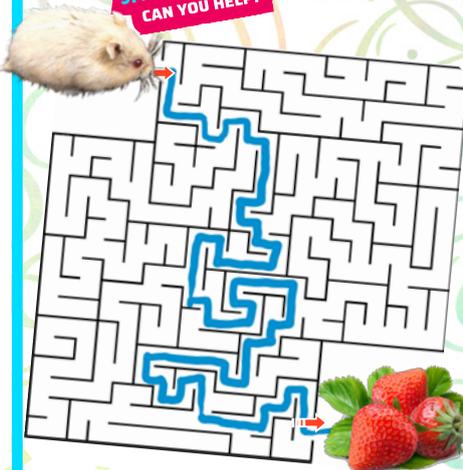
M	F	O	L	M	Q	R	J	A	H	B	R	Y	Y	C	R	T	J	S	N
G	H	N	P	B	T	E	S	T	A	N	D	T	R	A	C	E	Z	N	F
S	B	P	O	S	S	O	A	K	H	A	N	D	W	A	S	H	I	N	A
O	N	V	J	Z	A	P	B	V	A	C	C	I	N	E	M	E	V	X	R
C	B	I	N	C	N	E	H	O	M	E	S	C	H	O	O	L	I	N	G
I	U	D	X	O	I	N	O	M	Y	V	K	E	Y	W	O	R	K	E	R
A	B	E	W	R	T	I	P	C	O	V	I	D	T	J	S	O	H	U	Q
L	B	O	D	O	I	N	E	P	S	V	X	E	D	A	C	Y	H	Z	Y
D	L	C	C	N	Z	G	W	O	R	K	F	R	O	M	H	O	M	E	V
I	E	A	N	A	E	E	P	O	S	I	T	I	V	E	O	F	X	T	I
S	H	L	O	V	R	M	E	A	C	I	S	U	M	S	O	U	A	E	N
T	L	L	Z	I	K	C	J	I	B	R	E	J	P	G	C	L	R	K	S
A	Z	I	J	R	J	K	M	I	K	O	J	K	P	C	L	J	T	F	
N	X	N	F	U	M	E	N	E	G	A	T	I	V	E	L	O	L	I	A
C	K	G	P	S	D	B	W	A	M	W	C	M	R	A	O	U	F	N	C
I	N	G	J	N	G	R	A	I	N	B	O	W	S	V	S	G	W	G	E
N	R	E	A	A	C	K	L	O	C	K	D	O	W	N	U	H	X	Q	M
G	H	P	E	K	V	C	L	A	P	F	O	R	C	A	R	E	R	S	A
F	N	H	S	H	I	E	L	D	E	D	D	J	P	F	E	O	A	E	S
I	T	Q	U	R	S	T	A	Y	S	A	F	E	V	L	P	Y	I	L	K

- Handwash
- Sanitizer
- Hope
- Clapforcarers
- Shielded

ANSWERS
Words of 2020



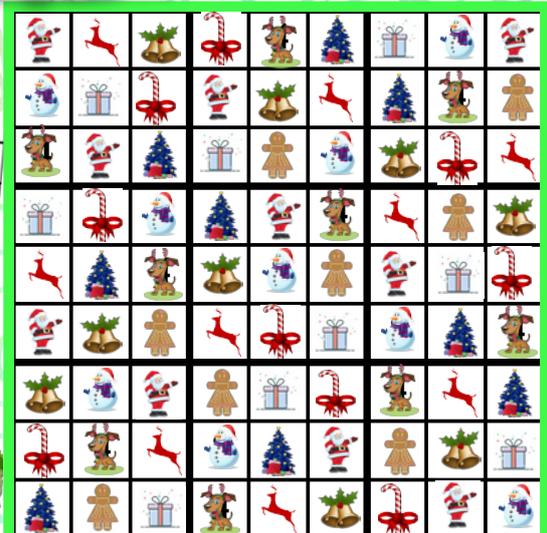
MOLLY loves strawberries
CAN YOU HELP?



Sudoku



M	F	O	L	M	Q	R	J	A	H	B	R	Y	Y	C	R	T	J	S	N
G	H	N	P	B	T	E	S	T	A	N	D	T	R	A	C	E	Z	N	F
S	B	P	O	S	S	O	A	K	H	A	N	D	W	A	S	H	I	N	A
O	N	V	J	Z	A	P	B	V	A	C	C	I	N	E	M	E	V	X	R
C	B	I	N	C	N	E	H	O	M	E	S	C	H	O	O	L	I	N	G
I	U	D	X	O	I	N	O	M	Y	V	K	E	Y	W	O	R	K	E	R
A	B	E	W	R	T	I	P	C	O	V	I	D	T	J	S	O	H	U	Q
L	B	O	D	O	I	N	E	P	S	V	X	E	D	A	C	Y	H	Z	Y
D	L	C	C	N	Z	G	W	O	R	K	F	R	O	M	H	O	M	E	V
I	E	A	N	A	E	E	P	O	S	I	T	I	V	E	O	F	X	T	I
S	H	L	O	V	R	M	E	A	C	I	S	U	M	S	O	U	A	E	N
T	L	L	Z	I	K	C	J	I	B	R	E	J	P	G	C	L	R	K	S
A	Z	I	J	R	J	K	M	I	K	O	J	K	P	C	L	J	T	F	
N	X	N	F	U	M	E	N	E	G	A	T	I	V	E	L	O	L	I	A
C	K	G	P	S	D	B	W	A	M	W	C	M	R	A	O	U	F	N	C
I	N	G	J	N	G	R	A	I	N	B	O	W	S	V	S	G	W	G	E
N	R	E	A	A	C	K	L	O	C	K	D	O	W	N	U	H	X	Q	M
G	H	P	E	K	V	C	L	A	P	F	O	R	C	A	R	E	R	S	A
F	N	H	S	H	I	E	L	D	E	D	D	J	P	F	E	O	A	E	S
I	T	Q	U	R	S	T	A	Y	S	A	F	E	V	L	P	Y	I	L	K



THANKS FOR SUPPORTING

HomeCool KIDS

DURING 2020



Now this has been a strange year! But, one of the positive outcomes has been HomeCool Kids. As we enter the New Year, we hope our magazine will grow into a child-led communication platform for children, by children.

We would love to hear from more amazing children

about their experiences and see examples of their creativity. If you would like to send in a submission, please ask your parent or guardian to contact us on homecoolkids@gmail.com We are a very friendly bunch!



©HomeCool

FOLLOW US ON



@homecoolkids