

Burton Hathow Ducklings

Newly hatched ducklings are the inspiration for a collection of paintings by Years 2 and 3 at Burton Hathow Preparatory School. Head of Art, Rachel Burch shares the activity.



By Rachel Burch

This year we decided to incubate duck eggs with Years 1 and 2 and everyone was delighted when Daisy and Pierre hatched. The children were fully involved in the care of the ducklings, the video shows the children giving them their first swim in a paddling pool. They grew quickly and were set free on the school lake at the beginning of July. Incredibly they have bonded with a family of mallards and are happily living together. We do still feed them and they are very tame, happily eating from the children's hands.



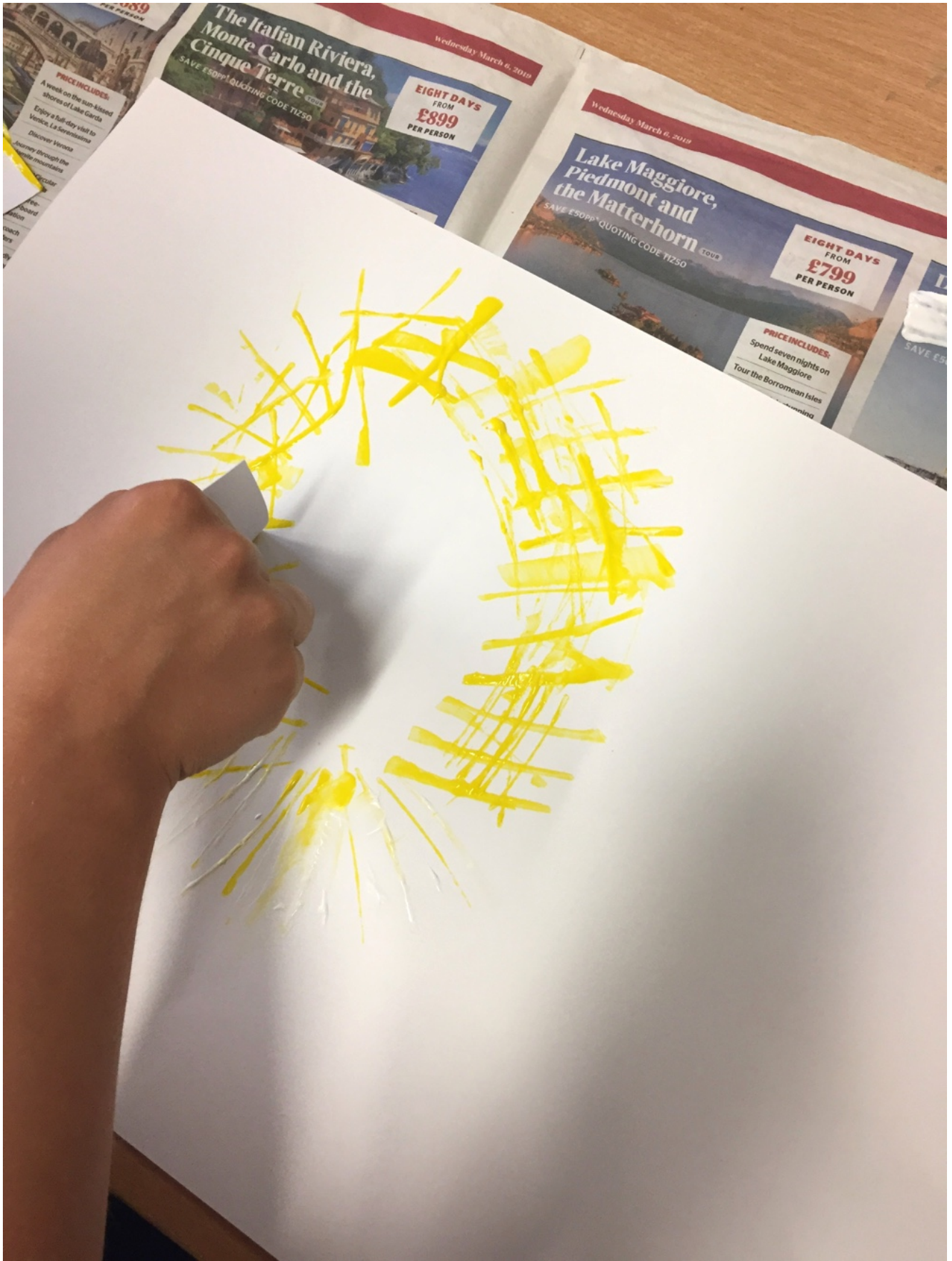
The challenge for the painting was for the children not to make a hard outline for the body and the heads of the ducklings. I introduced the idea of using different lengths of card to print, giving the effect of down.

With Year 2, I mixed up a couple of shades of yellow for them, and they painted directly onto A3 white cartridge paper. We talked about creating two overlapping circles for the head

and the body, one being larger than the other. The bills and legs were added using paintbrushes and the children mixed their own colours.













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With Year 3, we began with 'brusho' washes to give a blue

background. I made a range of colours available, and the children experimented with them, adding varying amounts of water to alter the intensity of the colour. It was important to keep reminding the children that this was a background and so less important than the painting that they were going to make over the top. 'Brusho' is exciting to use as it floods a page with vibrant colour quickly and easily, the children love using it. While the 'brusho' dried we went outside to observe the ducklings and discuss how we were going to paint them. It was interesting to note that the ducklings bills were pink and legs were orange.

Back in the classroom I demonstrated the card printing technique, body first, then overlapping head. I showed the children how by changing the angle of the head of duckling affects the mood/character of the painting. I used a cut out triangle of card and moved it into different places on my painting to demonstrate, and encouraged them to do the same before committing to the painted version.











The children were very proud of these paintings. I think because they love Daisy and Pierre so much, they had real affection for their paintings. This work clearly shows the difference between the two year groups, Year 2 on the white paper and Year 3 on the blue. I include the final photo of

Daisy and Pierre at the edge of the lake with their adopted family in the background!



As a result of the success of this project, Year 3 went onto make collaged paintings inspired by a summer meadow which you can see here: 'The Wildflower Meadow'.

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See more resources by Rachel Burch, including the 'The Wildflower Meadow' [here](#)

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