

Class Seven and Tessellations

Class Seven Lower have been immersed in a Main Lesson on tessellations — repeated patterns that fill a surface without leaving gaps. The students have seen how some regular polygons can be used to tile a surface, but others cannot. They've looked at the way tessellation units can be modified, using the rules of symmetry, to give beautiful, complex patterns.

Their drawings have involved focussed attention and precision, followed always by the calm activity of colouring. Colouring of course has its own artistic challenges, which they take on with pleasure.

The students' irrepressible imaginations have allowed square-based tessellations to metamorphose into sails on a pirate ship, and hexagonal tessellations to fill with bees.

Exploring 3-dimensional tessellations — solids that fill space leaving no gaps — turns our attention to the world we live in. How wonderful, for example, is the way the little juice sacs in an orange fit together so perfectly. The study of simpler tessellations aids our appreciation of the elegant way Nature works with themes that repeat and gradually metamorphose. *Paul Martin*

