

Dear parents,

It's been a busy final week of the half term in class 5. We've been finishing some projects off, writing some suspenseful stories and creating some online quizzes.

With Halloween fast approaching, we thought it only right to delve into some mysterious subject matter for our English lessons this week, and have been creating some writing inspired by the book 'The Mysteries of Harris Burdick'. The book, created by a man who supposedly disappeared into thin air, is a compilation of black and white sketches, with only one picture surviving of each story, along with a title and a caption. We studied three of these pictures ('Just Desserts', 'Mr Linden's Library' and 'Uninvited Guests') and discussed different ideas for stories based on them. We then thought about how to make a truly spine-chilling story using suspense and subtlety - the creak of a floorboard in the silence or the shadow in the dark - rather than shock or over-the-top description. The children then planned their own Harris Burdick-inspired short story using a story map, before carrying out a big write session to complete their fantastically spooky stories.

In maths, the children have been focusing on factors and multiples. As a group, they have solid times tables knowledge, which is a huge advantage for their current topic of multiplication and division. We've been working on identifying common factors using Venn diagrams, as well as applying these fluency skills to some reasoning and problem solving. We also introduced the class to prime factors, and a method for finding them. The class really enjoyed the process of breaking the numbers down into the smallest factors, and the satisfaction of these numbers then multiplying together to return to the number at the beginning.

In the afternoons this week, the children have been finalising the plans for their recycled plastic DT projects, which we will be constructing in the first week back after half term (if you could collect and send in any useful plastic, that would be really helpful), as well as putting the final touches on their science fair displays, which will also be taking place on the Tuesday of the first week back.

We found time for a quick grammar and spelling assessment. The results from the grammar assessment were really positive and show the hard work the children have put into this subject already. Spelling is going to be a bit of a focus after the holiday - we're going to get some of the rules and knowledge of common words and letter strings secure, as well as tackling the Year 5/6 list!

On Friday, we wrapped up our Wonder topic by watching the film together. It's a fantastic film, even if it isn't (quite) as brilliant as the book (but then again, not much can match up to the book!).

In addition to all of this, the children have also been creating their very own 'Kahoot' quizzes to summarise their learning this half term. After researching and creating their questions and using the format, the children then became the gameshow hosts and delivered the quiz for the class in their groups - a great opportunity to build confidence and speaking skills! The quizzes covered all of our topics and learning from the past 8 weeks: Wonder; mountain geography; materials and changes in science; the plastics issue; descriptive and metaphorical writing; tag rugby and hockey; mental maths and so much more.

There is no homework set over this half term, but, as always, reading little and often with your children will continue to have a huge impact on every facet of their learning. It doesn't matter what kind of text - although we always want to explore stories and boost imaginations, if a non-fiction book or magazine is what grabs your child's interest and gets them reading, then go for it! Our 'Spelling League' issues seem to have been resolved, so your child will be able to log in to practise their spellings and earn some upgrades for their team using their account (username: just their name, or, in some cases, their name and initial, password: surname followed by '123'). With these activities, and TTRockstars too, there should be plenty to keep them going over the next week, as well as enjoying their well-earned break. If you have any login issues or questions, feel free to email me at [timeaston@alne.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:timeaston@alne.n-yorks.sch.uk).

I've had a great first half term with the class, and the enthusiasm your children have for learning and fun in the classroom is completely infectious!

Hope you have a brilliant week,

Tim Easton