

Dear parents,

Between the science fair, our class trip and the upcoming Remembrance Day, we've had a real mix of topics and activities in Class 5 this week.

Sunday will mark the centenary of Armistice Day, and we've been taking some time in class to learn about World War 1. We discussed the war in general terms, and studied some pictures to give us information about what life was like for the soldiers who fought in the trenches of northern France and Belgium. We then read and discussed some real letters penned by soldiers and addressed to their loved ones at home, along with the accompanying stories of what happened to those young men. The children then wrote their own letters home from the trenches, explaining what life was like and explaining their thoughts and emotions.

On Thursday, the children continued their writing on World War 1 by studying some war poetry. We thought about why the two very different concepts of war and poetry came together in the war, and the reasons that poets felt the need to put pen to paper when the conditions around them were so atrocious - to help themselves to make sense of and deal with their circumstances, to tell others what the war was really like or simply to pass the time. In groups, the children rehearsed and performed a range of WW1 poems - which had to include John McCrae's rousing 'In Flanders Fields', but also 'The Soldier', the patriotic and heartfelt poem by Rupert Brooke and its antithesis - the harrowing 'Dulce et Decorum Est' by Wilfred Owen. Their performances were really effective, and they really thought about the message that the poet was trying to deliver and used their speaking and performance skills in order to represent this. The children then wrote their own poems to remember those that have died in conflicts, which ranged from narratives that told stories from the front, to descriptive and evocative poems which evoked fields of poppies and sunsets.

Tuesday afternoon was our first ever Class 5 and 6 Science Fair, and it would be fair to say that the bar has been set very high! We were absolutely blown away by the fantastic demonstrations, explanations and information that the children brought to share with both adults and younger children in the school. It was fantastic to see the children confidently explaining complex scientific concepts to such a broad range of people and ages, and the word 'Wow!' could be heard echoing around the room every time a rocket was launched, a freshly-made fossil was revealed, a lemon powered an alarm clock or a chemical-reaction-fuelled volcano erupted. Thank you for the time that you have put in with your children to help them prepare.

We had a fantastic time at Magna Science Museum on Wednesday. The children definitely enjoyed the 'hands on' nature of the exhibits, which included a fire vortex, a wide range of water-themed physics activities (which explains the wet shoes...) and an interactive activity in which they mined, processed and sorted rock. The JCB digger

was also a big hit! There was so many opportunities for great scientific conversation and explanation, and it was great to hear the children being so curious and, once they had discovered an answer for themselves, relaying this learning to their friends.

The children's homework this week is to find out, if possible, how their family was affected in any way by the First World War. They can ask you or other relatives, and share their findings with the class next week.

Have a great weekend,

Tim Easton