

Dear Parents,

First of all, happy new year! I hope you had a wonderful Christmas with your families and friends. Thank you very much for all of your thoughtful gifts in the run-up to the end of term.

We've begun 2019 with a very busy week! After our 'welcome back' assembly with Miss Dawson, we discussed our topic for this term – the Vikings! The children are really excited for this topic (as am I – it's a personal favourite) so we talked about what we already knew about the Vikings, what we didn't know about them and the parts of the topic that the children are most excited about. This helps to guide us in answering their questions about this period of history as well as choosing activities that the children are going to enjoy the most.

We have also made a start on this term's maths topic – fractions, decimals and percentages. In their talking partner pairs, the children were given a random handful of skittles and asked to record the amount of different colours in as many ways possible – this led to lots of great ideas such as bar charts, pictograms, ratios, bar models and fractions. We focused in on the fractions aspect and worked on simplifying the fractions by finding equivalent fractions, recapping this understanding from last year. We then ate enough sweets so that everyone was left with a total amount that was a factor of 100, which allowed us to cover the new skill of converting fractions to percentages – something we'll be revisiting this term quite a few times. It was a fun and edible way to introduce the children to the concepts we'll be working on for the next couple of months, which we then followed up with some consolidation work on equivalent fractions on Wednesday.

Wednesday, of course, was Young Voices day, which was attended by the majority of the class. The children were fantastic, and enjoyed being part of the 'world's largest children's choir'. A long day, but totally worth it when the lights go off and the sound of 5,000 voices echo around the arena – a real experience and a fantastic reward for the hard work they've put into practising so hard for the last few months.

We've been preparing for some Viking-themed writing by learning about their gods this week, too. Our class reading book at the moment tells the myths and stories that the Vikings passed on about their gods and the way our universe works, and we carried out some pencil sketches of 4 of the key deities on Thursday morning, allowing us to learn about their backgrounds, characteristics and defining features. We'll be using their fantastic sketches as a basis for some character descriptions in English next week.

We will be visiting Jorvik as part of this term's topic (more details to follow in the coming weeks), and just a reminder that cross country will be taking place on this coming Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> January, which all KS2 children will be attending.

Have a great weekend,

Tim Easton