
Friday 18th January 2019

Dear Parents

On Thursday I had the pleasure of taking Year 5 for a history lesson (my favourite subject, for those who don't know). The instruction from Hazel Sykes was to cover the gap of the Middle Ages between the Normans and the Tudors, a topic I am particularly keen on. So we embarked on a whistle-stop tour unmasking the civil war in the wake of Henry I's death, storming through the expanding of England's lands under Henry II, unpicking the impact of King John signing the Magna Carta and the subsequent birth of parliament and the rule of law, cantering across the Scottish border disputes of the early Edwards and delving into the murky politics of the War of the Roses... all in an hour!

In our discussions we explored the challenge of managing power struggles, the importance of stable leadership, the impact on the common man and the patriarchy of Salic law. The girls were particularly unimpressed to find out that they would have been a long way down the pecking order when it came to inheritance, especially Evie when I explained that Monty would have been King before her!

And yet to paint such a chauvinistic picture simplifies the intricacies and subtleties of royal and political life and inaccurately portrays many of the famous characters of the age. Two that have always stood out to me are Queen Matilda and Eleanor of Aquitaine. The only child of Henry I, the former was married at 12 to the then Holy Roman Emperor and was crowned as an imperial regent at just 14. Upon her first husband's death she returned to Normandy and was pronounced heir to the English throne. However, her cousin Stephen (was also, incidentally, married to another cousin of both of theirs', also called Matilda!) seized the throne on Henry I's death and what followed was a bitter civil war with all the plotting and intrigue we'd expect. What marks Matilda out, is her ability to successfully carry out the necessary roles of a Middle Ages leader: a martial strategist, a forward-thinking centrist who managed estates and revenues and a law-maker and religious supporter. Her guile and cunning (and she was capable of just the same level of calculated unpleasantness as some of her male peers!) as well as her vision for the future meant that, though she was never formally crowned, she paved the way for, and acted as an advisor during, the reign of her son Henry II.

Which brings us on to Eleanor. Henry had the fortune (although on occasion I'm sure it must have felt like misfortune!) of being born to an incredible mother who then married him to an incredible wife! History paints the picture of Eleanor bringing with her the Southern French territories of Aquitaine and, thereby, expanding the English empire, but this again, undermines Eleanor's impact. She was wife to both French and English kings, at the time two of the most powerful men in the world, and gave birth to ten children, three of whom would become kings. Throughout her life she ruled with her husbands and, in the case of Richard the Lionheart, as regent in place of her son. There is probably not space here to fully expand upon her remarkable talents, but I would direct you towards the excellent film *The Lion in Winter* which portrays her difficult relationship with Henry II (who was so worried about the threat she posed

to his reign that he eventually had her imprisoned for 16 years – high praise indeed!)

Both of these extraordinary women prompted us to think about another lady faced with a daunting task and surrounded by political intrigue. Yes, they started talking about Brexit! Unsurprisingly, we weren't able to come to any firm conclusions about Theresa May's path moving forwards. Later in the day, however, I had a current affairs discussion with 6AP where we explored as many of the intricacies of the situation as possible within the hour. Like Year 5, they were unable to reach any agreement, though there was some well-considered debate along the way. I think they've all gone away not envying Mrs May's mission, but also with an increased appreciation of the importance of discussion, understanding, negotiation, consideration and acceptance of differences.

On a brighter note, congratulations to the Junior School band for their performance in Music Meeting – sorry I couldn't be up on stage with you!

Head of Junior School Awards:

Lieu Yen, Y3

Sam M, Y6

Next week we are looking forward to our first fixtures of the term and, on Thursday and Friday, will be welcoming 42 Year 6s! Don't worry, we are not going to cram them all into Nick Hadley and Alice Pennell's classrooms – they are prospective pupils joining hoping to join Year 7 next in September. Our present Year 6s will be involved over the two days, including some team-building activities on Friday where they will get to work with their future classmates.

In friendship

Edward Rossiter
Head of Junior School
Sibford School

Ps. Did you know that Matilda's epitaph was "Great by birth, greater by marriage, greatest in her offspring: here lies Matilda, the daughter, wife, and mother of Henry" – not a bad soubriquet for eternity?

Foundation and Reception

The week started with the children telling 'helicopter stories'. These are not stories about helicopters but stories that the children tell to an adult who scribes for them. These are then acted out by all of the children. We had a range of wonderful stories about pirates, dinosaurs and jungle animals. If you want to find out more about them then take a look at the link below <https://www.makebelievearts.co.uk/helicopterstorieslettingimaginationfly>.

Last week took us to the moon, but this was clearly not far enough for the Early Years children. This week we visited the distant Planet of Zim Zam, for an alien tea. There were flying pizzas, musical biscuits and a very strange looking Jelly! We then used salt dough to make our own alien inspired food. We will be painting it today and making lots of exciting alien inspired dishes next week. Look out in the next newsletter for a taste of what we produce.





Year 1 and 2

Riddles were the focus for Year 1 and 2 in their English this week. They continued to look at their features and how to use tricky clues, adjectives and similes to write their own. Of course, in order to get their ideas flowing, they had to taste the different chocolate bars which they were going to write about, these included Crunchie, Milkybar, Twirl and Ripple. Below are two riddles written about one of the chocolate bars we've tasted, can you guess which one?

I am white like a polar bear. A start with a M.
I am creamy like milk.
What am I?
(Darcey - Year 1)

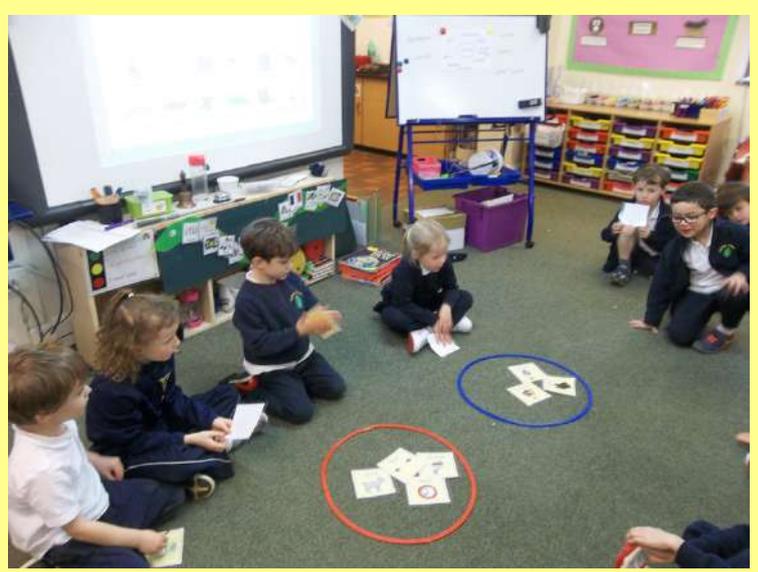
I am brown on the inside like a tree branch.
I am purple on the outside like a plum.
My letters are bright yellow like the sun.
On the inside I am silver like a star.
I am as long as a pencil but shorter than a ruler.
I melt when you put me in your mouth.
What am I?
(Ella-Mae - Year 2)



In their Maths, they investigate how to make different numbers and how number bonds can help us with arithmetic, some of the children particularly enjoyed playing 'Snap' to make 8. If you venture into the classroom, you might be mistaken that Becca Edwards and the children are going on a trip, as they've looked at hot and cold climates around the world, thinking carefully about what they might have to pack in their suitcase. They also continued to look at Central American Bark Art and how C/S curves can be used to make the pictures more decorative, they investigated how they could interpret this style. Finally, in their Science, they



looked at the differences between alive and not alive; with some of the children starting to think about the 7 life processes.



Year 3

Year 3 began the week by learning about the Christian creation story in Genesis, including the story of Adam and Eve. This provided opportunities to talk about occasions whereby Year 3 might have been tempted (chocolate cake seemed to be a theme), also occasions whereby they might have felt guilty; although some pupils were adamant that they had never done anything to warrant feeling guilty in their lives!

The English topic for this week has been 'Fantastic Mr Fox'. To explore the character of 'Mr Fox', pupils put on some fox masks and moved around the playground in ways which could be true to his character. They moved suspiciously, cautiously, frantically and smartly to reflect Mr Fox's character at different stages of the book.

Year 3 have continued to look at pattern in their Art lessons. They have been studying the natural patterns of scaly creatures such as fish and lizards and using these as inspiration for their own beautifully patterned dragons.

Finally, The Stone Age has arrived in the Year 3 classroom! Pupils have been contemplating how we know so much about people who lived so long ago, and have consequently been wondering, in awe, how such cave paintings and artefacts managed to survive for so long! They have also been studying different sources to find out information about these humans who were so similar in some ways, yet so different in others to ourselves. They were particularly impressed by the range of tools that they created from seemingly limited resources! I have a feeling that some pupils might keep an eye out for some flint this weekend!

Year 4

In both Year 4 groups the competition to design and make a toy car that travels the fastest and the furthest is now on...initial designs are impressive but may need a little tweaking to make them viable/doable.

Children in 4MA enjoyed an enlightening Forest school lesson as they learnt how to ignite a fairy fire. On Wednesday the wet weather did little to dampen their efforts and children successfully lit two miniature fires using flint and steel, plus some very dry kindling materials. On top of all of this 4MA are looking at a new class book called Christophe's Story, an emotional book to read which recounts the plight of a young Rwandan boy who comes to live in England.

Year 6

Year 6 have had another busy week. Lots of Fraction Action in Maths, and 6AP also found a spare minute to revise Time, while 6NH were trying to coordinate their co-ordinates!

The children have done some fantastic creative poetry writing in Literacy, inspired by The Highway Man, and have written some very atmospheric, and frankly rather scary, stories based around a mysterious picture. Our weekly visit to the Senior School library continues to be a highlight, and the children are all using their Genre guides to vary their reading matter.

Some very yummy 'dips' were made in Food & Nutrition by this term's cookery group, while some of us got very soggy digging over our vegetable beds before the cold weather comes. We are planning on growing potatoes, pumpkins and runner beans this year. We continue to learn about the weather and are secretly hoping for some snow-days soon!



Drum Showcase Evening - Thursday, 17th January 2019

Congratulations to all the performers who played at the 'Drum Showcase' last night. The audience were treated to a magnificent display from pupils from Year 3 to Year 10. Many thanks to the drum tutors Belinda Webb and Matt Dibbens for their inspiration and support.

Fiona Hudson (Head of Music)

Sibford School Ski Trip (Years 4-13) - Friday, 5th April to Saturday, 13th April 2019

There are still a few spaces available on the above ski trip this Easter. If you would like your child to attend the above trip or require further information, please contact Lynne Singer

lsinger@sibfordschool.co.uk as soon as possible. This will be an excellent opportunity to ski in Rodeneck in the Italian Alps. For parents of children who are already signed up there will be a Parent Information Meeting on Friday, 1st February at 3.45pm in the Ensemble Room in the Music Block.



Stratford Upon Avon Foodbank

Stratford Upon Avon Foodbank thank everyone for their recent donations, however at the moment they currently have a most pressing need for:

- UHT FRUIT JUICE
- LOO ROLL
- SMALL JARS COFFEE
- POWDERED MILK
- SMALL SIZES LAUNDRY POWDER/LIQUID
- WASHING UP LIQUID
- MENS TOILETRIES -SHAVING GEL -RAZORS

Items we have in abundance :-

- PASTA
- RICE
- BISCUITS
- CRISPS
- CEREAL
- RICE
- BEANS
- NAPPIES
- BABY FOOD
- FEMININE HYGEINE
- PET FOOD
- POT NOODLES

Lost Property

Arthur Baker has lost his Fleece PE Top, named. Please could everyone check their bags in case it has been picked up in error.

Swimming Success

Well done to Sibford Swimmers Leo, Kezia, Oscar and Emma who recently were awarded Club Championship medals at 4SSC. These medals are awarded to swimmers who have accumulated the most points across both the Spring and Autumn Championships, which places them in the top three for their age groups.



We are delighted that Oscar and Leo were also selected to represent 4SSC at the recent Oxfordshire County Relay Championships where they swam brilliantly and learned a lot from competing at this high level. We would like to wish Emma good luck in her County Relays this weekend and also for her upcoming County Individual events that she has qualified for next month. A fantastic achievement by all! (Claire Ferley, Director of Sport)

Pie n Quiz Night - Friday, 8th March 2019

PSFA is to hold a Pie n Quiz Night on Friday 8 March. Tickets cost £8 per person including food. Suggested team size is 6 people. Buy tickets as a team (invite your friends) or come along as an individual/couple and teams will be made up on the night. Tickets are on sale from reception. Numbers are limited so get in quick!

Dates for the Diary

Tuesday, 22 nd January	U11 Netball and Football v Cokethorpe – H
Thursday, 24 th January	Year 3/4 Horse Riding
Friday, 25 th January	Celebration Meeting – Holocaust Week, Oliver Studio at 3.40pm
Monday, 28 th January	SFL Parent/Teacher Meetings
Tuesday, 29 th January	U8/9 Football/Netball v Kitebrook – Away U11 Athletics Family Tournament at the Warriner – Away
Friday, 1 st February	Junior School Open Morning U11 Hockey – Family Tournament – Away Ski Trip Parent Information Meeting, Music Block, Ensemble Room at 3.45pm

PSFA PIE & QUIZ NIGHT



**7.30pm Friday 8 March
in the Dining Room**

Tickets £8 per person including food

Soft drinks will be supplied but feel free to bring your own wine/beer

Make up a team (adults only) and come and join us ...
numbers are limited so don't leave it too late!

Tickets on sale from the Junior & Senior School reception