



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Trust

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

9th February 2024

Every child is a treasure - small in size, growing in God's love.

Diary Dates

Monday 19th February – Friday 23rd

February - Half Term break

Monday 26th February – Haffydown

Class trip

Monday 4th March – Danes and

Puddlebridge trip to Tower bridge

Thursday 7th March – World Book Day

(further details TBC)

Clothing collection

Friday 8th March – Mothering Service

in church

Monday 18th March – Parent Teacher

consultations

Thursday 21st March – Parent Teacher

consultations

Monday 25th March – Reward Day

Tuesday 26th March – Easter breakfast

Thursday 28th March – Easter Service,

Ceramic egg rolling and decoration.

Last day of Spring Term

Tuesday 16th April – Summer Term

begins

Monday 13th May – Thursday 16th

May – Year Six SATs Assessments

January can sometimes seem like a very long month with the cold weather and dark evenings. However, in school, it seemed to simply fly by! It is always a pleasure to visit the classrooms during the school day; there is always so much learning going on and it is a delight to see all of the children so engaged and happy. Recently, we have had several visitors look around the school and they are always very impressed too.

Each Tuesday, we celebrate the learning going on in school during our **House Worship**. This week, it was the turn of some of the children from **Coventry House** to share some of the learning that they are most proud of. All four houses have now had their turn for this half term – so look out for our **Shining Stars** next week. Their names will be on the next newsletter.

It is wonderful to see so many children getting involved with the **after-school enrichment opportunities** on offer at Aston. These include football club, cookery, golf and multi-sports. Groups of children in Year Six are also arriving in school at 8am once a week to get some extra practice in preparation for their SATs assessments in May. Their enthusiasm and determination is a delight to witness – and they are always rewarded for this with some breakfast treats!

Towards the end of this newsletter, you will find a letter from **Stevenage Football Club** about **Boro Bear's Book Club competition** which they are running in support of National Story Telling Week. There are some exciting prizes up for grabs – it would be great if they were to receive some entries from some of our children.

With only one more school week to go until the half-term break, we would like to wish you a very happy weekend and a relaxing half term break when we get there!

Please be reminded that, should you need to contact us outside the usual school day, you can do so via email on:

closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024

SPRING TERM

Thursday 4th January 2024 to Thursday 28th March 2024

Half Term - Monday 19th February 2024– Friday 23rd February 2024

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 16th April 2024 to Friday 19th July 2024

Bank Holiday – Monday 6th May 2024 – SCHOOL CLOSED

Half Term – Monday 27th May 2024 – Friday 31st May 2024

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025

AUTUMN TERM

Tuesday 3rd September 2024 to Friday 20th December 2024

Half Term – Monday 28th October 2024–Friday 1st November 2024

Occasional Day Monday 25th November 2024 – **School closed**

SPRING TERM

Tuesday 7th January 2025 to Friday 4th April 2025

Half Term – Monday 17th February 2025– Friday 21st February 2025

SUMMER TERM

Tuesday 22nd April 2025 to Friday 18th July 2025

Bank Holiday – Monday 5th May 2025 – **School closed**

Half term – Monday 26th May 2025 – Friday 30th May 2025

Inset Days –**School closed**

Inset day – Monday 2nd September 2024

Occasional day – Monday 25th November 2024

Inset day – Monday 6th January 2025

Inset day – Monday 21st, Tuesday 22nd, Wednesday 23rd July 2025

School Meals

To order school meals, please log onto your School Gateway account via the website or the app.

DINNER MONEY FEES £3.25 per meal



Please note that from April 1st, the price will increase to £3.40 per meal.

House Points

Canterbury



402

St. Paul's



492

St. Albans



449

Coventry



463

A Thought from Reverend Jenny:

In the 1950s, mortality rates in the small Pennsylvanian town of Roseto were noticed to be a third lower than the rest of the USA. Heart disease was almost non-existent in otherwise high-risk groups. No-one could work out why. Water and air quality were analysed. Lifestyles and health care examined. It was a mystery. What was different was eventually found to be people's relationships. Three, sometimes four, generations lived under the same roof. Neighbours trusted one another and people were surrounded by good friends. Friendship had a profoundly positive effect on their emotional, physical and spiritual well-being. Regardless of diet or exercise, they were living longer, healthier lives, suggesting 'it is better to eat kebabs with friends than salad on your own'! **(Phil Knox)**

Technology makes us more connected today than ever before, yet 40% of 16-24 year olds say they 'always or often feel lonely'. The Movember Foundation found 1 in 3 men have no close friends. The Government recognise an 'epidemic of loneliness' in appointing a Minister for Loneliness. Relational poverty in the UK, people feeling 'disconnected', contributes to today's steep rise in mental health problems.

It seems investing time and energy in creating and maintaining friendships really matters. As Jesus shows throughout the gospels, befriending people can change their life (and ours) for good.

'Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.' (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

'If you want to have a friend, be a friend'. (Anon)

Notices



On Friday 2nd February, Puddlebridge and Danes competed in NSPCC Rocks – a national competition hosted by Times Tables Rock Stars for NSPCC Number Day. NSPCC Rocks required children to correctly answer as many multiplication and division questions as possible. The competition was fierce with 85,853,488 questions answered collectively by 277,437 pupils from more than 3,870 schools around the country!

Aston St. Mary's achieved 18th place out of 3,793 schools.

This fantastic result is a testament to the children's hard work to secure their knowledge of multiplication facts up to 12 x 12. On average, the children in Years Four, Five and Six answered a staggering 1,232 questions each correctly during Friday's competition. This really is impressive fluency!

As you may be aware, children are assessed on the knowledge of multiplication facts via the MTC (multiplication tables check) during the summer term of Year Four. This is a statutory check to determine whether pupils can recall their times tables fluently, which is essential for future success in mathematics. It also helps schools to identify pupils who have not yet mastered their times tables, so that additional support can be provided.

At Aston St. Mary's, our results in the MTC are consistently significantly higher than national averages which enables our pupils to be in a strong position to tackle the Year Five and Six maths curriculum.

Weekly sessions are set by teachers for children in Years Two – Six. Please ensure that your child completes these sessions every week; regular short bursts of practice really does aid fluency.

Read, Read, Read!

Supporting your child to become an avid and enthusiastic reader really is one of the most important ways in which you can help enable your child's future success. Strong readers not only become competent writers but they also they build a rich and varied vocabulary, they develop empathy and imagination. All this as well as gaining a wealth of knowledge and understanding about their world. Perhaps most importantly, they can enjoy travelling to different times and places in order to simply relax and recharge.

Please ensure that your child reads regularly at home in order to develop their fluency and enjoyment. Younger children should be reading aloud to an adult most days. Please ensure that this is recorded in your child's reading record book. Older children should also be reading widely and often – sometimes to an adult and often to themselves.

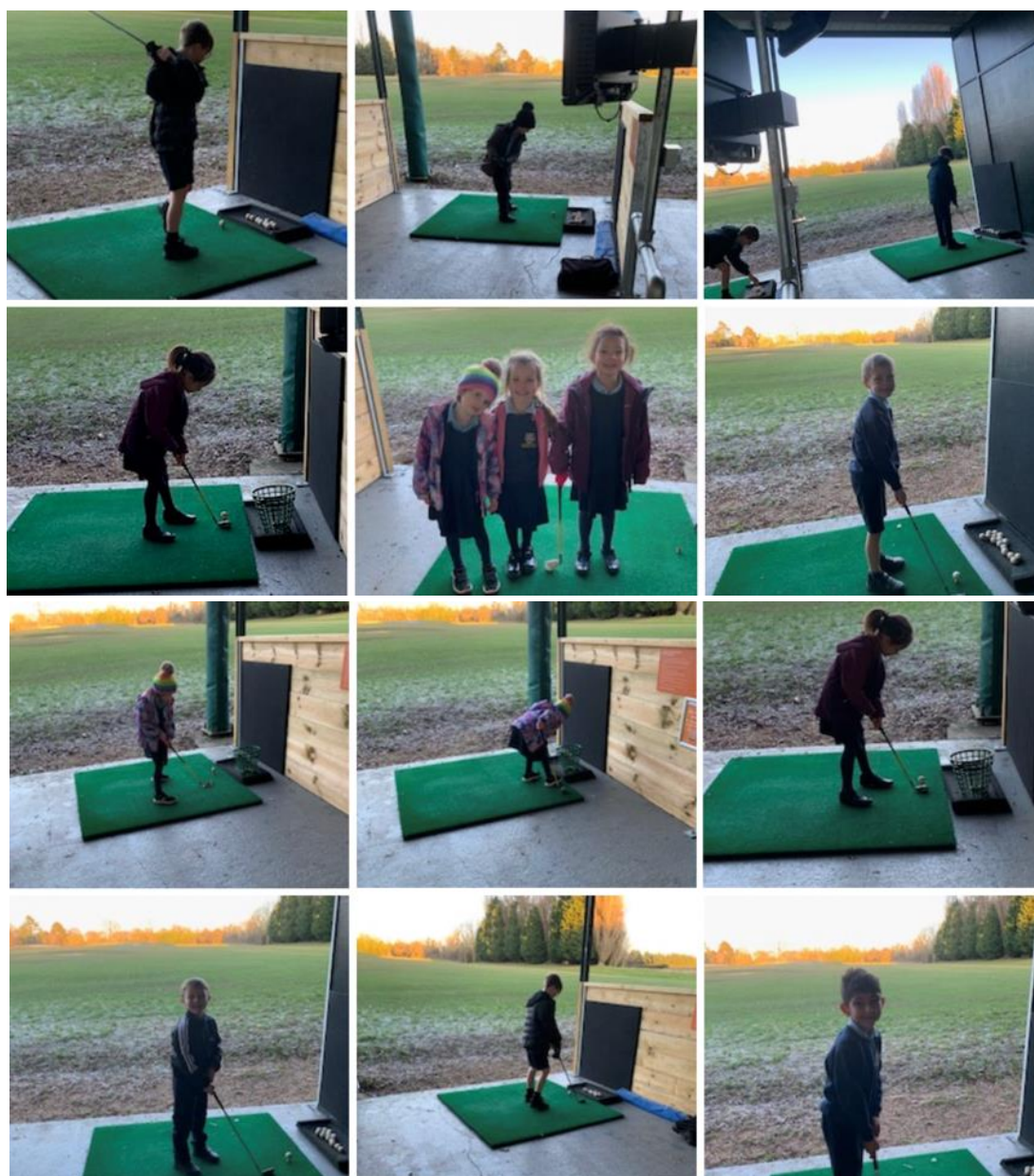


Golf

Golf Lessons

At the beginning of term, the golf lessons started with Paul Ring, the golf professional at Stevenage Golf Course. These sessions are well attended by our children. When I went along to see them, I was very impressed by what they have learned already. The children could explain how to stand correctly as they learn to swing a golf club properly. The progress already is amazing, with the children thoroughly enjoying the lessons. Our school's private lessons will continue after half-term. If your child would like to join the golf lessons, there are still some spaces left, so please ask in the office for a form. The lessons usually take place at the golf course, in a cornered off section of the golf range. The children are receiving high-quality lessons using the proper golf equipment. They are learning the basics of golf, such as, how to hold a golf club and stand correctly when striking the ball. Hopefully, the children will learn the skills needed to play golf as they get older and enjoy becoming golfers in the future.

Mrs Winwood

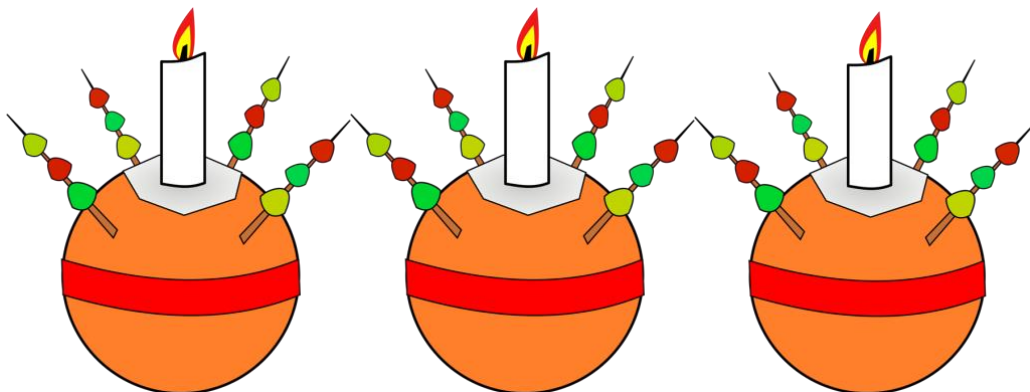


Christingle



Last Friday, we celebrated in school with a Christingle service. We all came together throughout the morning to make our Christingles. We know that the orange represents the world and the sticks with fruit represent the seasons and the food that the earth produces for us. We also know that the candle represents Jesus the light of the world and the red ribbon represents His love for us.

We spent time together, praying, worshipping and then have a quiet reflective time lighting the candles. One child in Year Six had their candle lit and passed it either side of them, representing Jesus' light being passed from person to person.



Class News

Shackadell Class

Following on from our learning about **Superheroes**, we have been learning all about people who help us in real life. We have been reading books such as '**Real Superheroes**' by Julia Seal and '**My Mummy is a Firefighter**' by Jason Bryan and Kerrine Bryan.



We had a fantastic time dressing as doctors, nurses, vets, firefighters and even RNLI lifesavers. It is really interesting to learn about these kinds of jobs. People who work in these kinds of jobs have to use lots of specialist equipment and clothing.

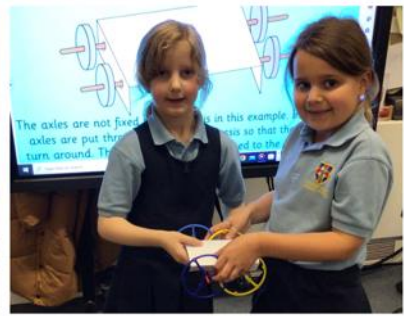
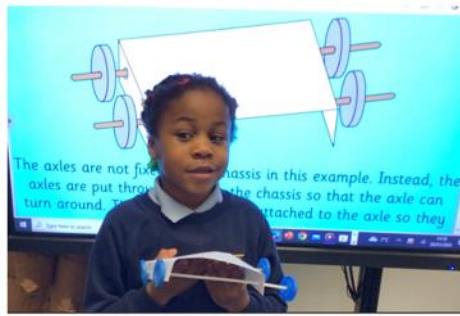


As part of our learning about police officers, we had our own investigation when Mrs Holmes' sweets mysteriously went missing. We found evidence, followed the clues and found out that it was Miss Heritage! She was very apologetic and of course we forgave her.

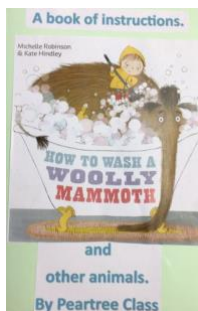
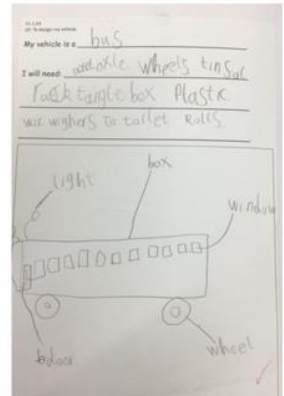


Class News

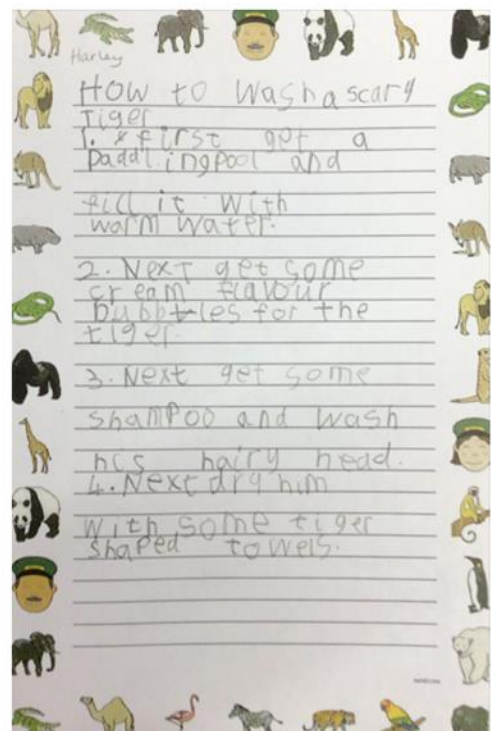
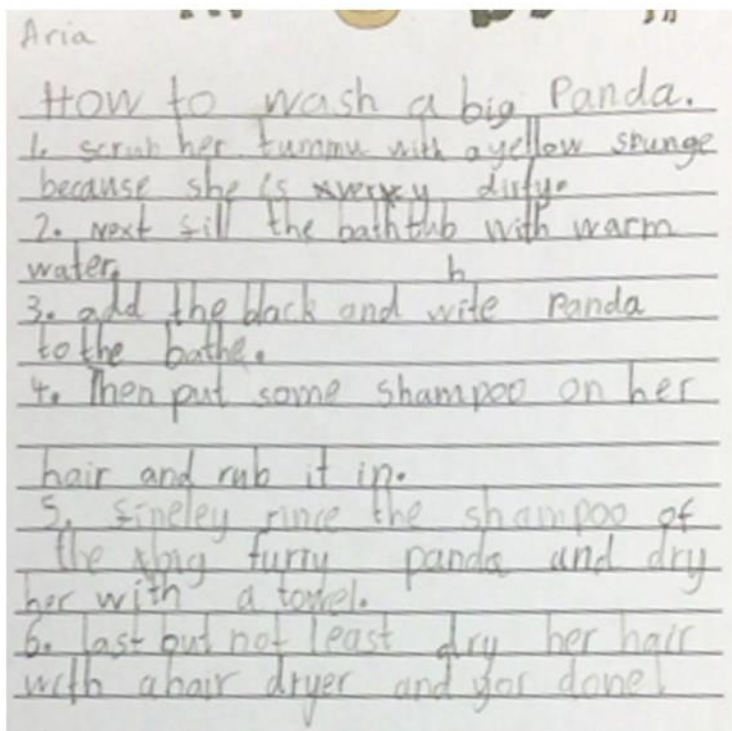
Peartree Class



As you may know our Design and Technology topic this half term is about **wheeled vehicles**. The children have experimented with making a chassis with fixed or rotating axles and have designed the type of vehicle they want to make. Here are some examples.



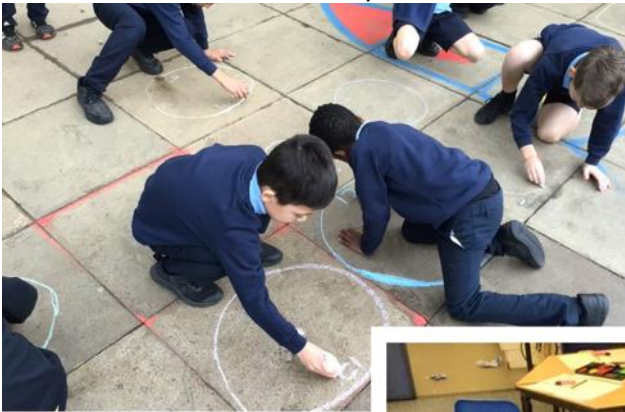
In English, we have been learning about writing instructions. We enjoyed reading 'How to Wash a Woolly Mammoth' by Kate Hindley and Michelle Robinson. We have created a class book of instructions based on this. Here are some of our interesting instructions on how to wash a variety of other animals. Please feel free to pop into class and have a look.



Class News

Haffydown Class

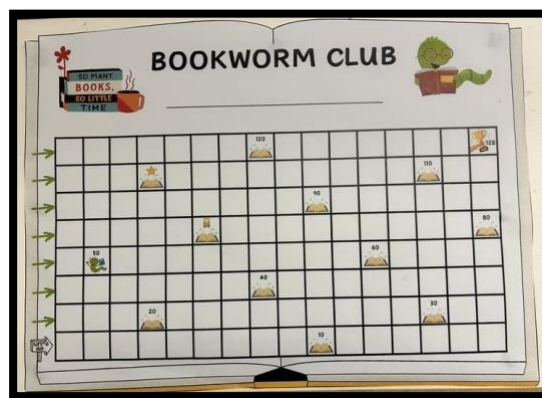
In Maths this term, Haffydown have been exploring time - you may have seen evidence of our clocks on the floor outside the classroom! Haffydown have made fantastic clocks from paper plates and applied their addition and subtraction skills to working out the time, both to and past, the hour. We have also learnt about days, months and years. Haffydown made the number of days in each month using Cuisenaire rods and then learnt the knuckle rhyme.



In English, we read Julian is a Mermaid and discovered how powerful our imaginations can be. We explored the tradition of Carnival and uncovered the Caribbean influences within the book.

In Geography, our learning has taken us all over the world, through different time zones and a variety of climates. It has been a joy seeing all the fantastic home learning brought in so far!

Our new Bookworm Club has got off to a very successful start! For every 10 reads at home, Haffydown have uncovered a milestone incentive. The 20 milestone was a chance to read to children in Shackadell and share their work with them.



We are very excited to be 50 books away from our 1000 book goal! This massive class effort smashed our goal much quicker than we thought! Well done Haffydown, we are extremely proud of you!

Class News

Puddlebridge Class

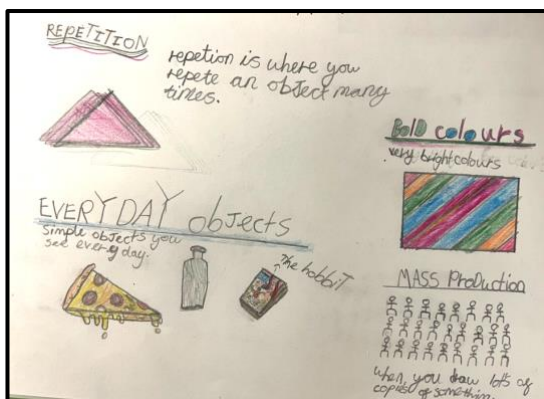


In English, we have thoroughly enjoyed delving into the 1883 story of Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi. Our exploration began with the use of drama to unravel the comedic elements within the narrative. Next, we ventured into crafting our own comedic pieces of writing, generating a range of imaginative ideas. This week, we immersed ourselves in the 1940 Disney cartoon adaptation in order to write a comparison, outlining both similarities and differences, while considering the reasons behind these variations.



Our recent maths lessons have revolved around fractions. Through the use of visual models and multiplication techniques, we learned to identify equivalent fractions. Additionally, we delved into the concept of improper fractions, learning how to convert them into mixed numbers.

During Science, Year 4 experienced an interesting and somewhat messy session while modelling the human digestive system. Employing a pair of old tights to simulate intestines, we pondered the transformative journey of food into faeces.



In Art, we have continued our exploration of Andy Warhol and Pop Art. We identified some key vocabulary and concepts integral to the pop art movement and created a visual glossary to demonstrate our understanding.

Class News

Danes Class

As dusk arrived
the sky went dim,
stars filled the above
some like a spark,
but some quite shy.

Twilight was everlasting
as the tramp of homing men,
left a hard working day
and as they got home,
heard the last call of the last child
it was evening.

A lone bird twittered
as the lamps were lit,
our world went silent
and the whole town prepared for rest.

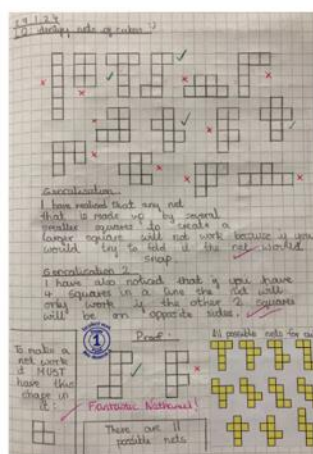
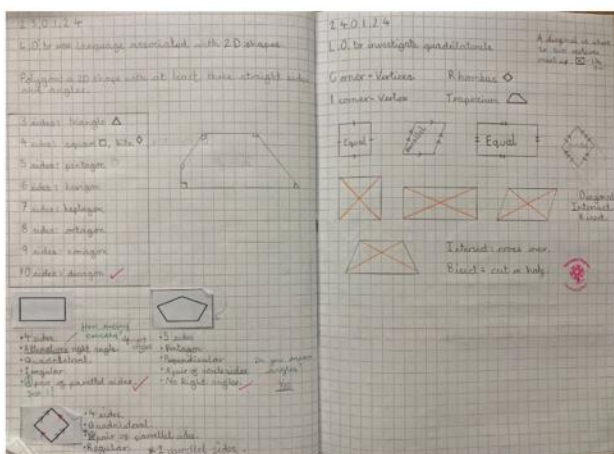
Great simile!

I sat still,
The last ray of the sun,
The first ray of the moon,
At this,
The farmer returns
Home.

The sap on the trees, for
frozen like time
The last child running home,
After their mothers call.
A multitude of colours filled the sky,
A view everybody stopped to see,
Nocturnal critters awakening,
A rainbow from moon to sun,
from earth to space.
A crunch of snow, in
Our little house,
With its friends in the night,
Aeroplane alone while full of life,
A view anyone can see,
A special view,
Only seen from day to night.
Anywhere
Everywhere.
Silence.

Excellent work *Effie*

Last week in English, we read the poem 'Great City' by Harold Monro. We looked at how Monro successfully made us feel that sunset is something special. Some of the techniques he used included: alliteration, similes, contrasting silence with noise and the use of his first and final stanzas like 'bookends'. We then wrote our own poems on the theme of sunsets.



In maths, we are developing our **geometric reasoning**. Firstly, we explored the properties of 2D shapes before moving on to investigating the nets of 3D solids. We looked at the many different nets for a cube then made our own nets for other prisms and also different pyramids. We are now focusing on angles; Year Five are making amazing progress using protractors!



Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are pleased to let you know that **Boro Bear's Book Club Competition** is back!

In support of National Storytelling Week, we want to inspire children up to 12 years old to get creative and write a short story about the adventures of Boro Bear.

This year, Boro Bear has found a time machine that can take him to **ANY POINT IN TIME**. He can visit the past or the future! – Which will he choose? He has unlimited money and resources, so his opportunities are endless! What moment in time does he travel to? What will he do? Who does he meet? You decide! 📖

There are lots of exciting prizes up for grabs including:

- The two winners (one KS1 & one KS2) will have their story printed in the official Stevenage FC Match Day Programme and will be invited to the same SFC home game to be interviewed on the pitch and receive their prizes!
- We will also choose a few other stories to post on our website and social media channels. These special mentions could also receive special prizes such as SFC match day tickets, goody bags, and certificates!

Entries must be submitted by **THURSDAY 29TH FEBRUARY 2024!**

To enter, please visit our website using the **link** below or **scan the QR code!**

<https://stevenagefcfoundation.com/get-involved/national-storytelling-week-2024/>

Any questions or queries, please contact the Education Team at schools@stevenagefcf.com.



Stevenage Football Club Foundation



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community@stevenagefcf.com



www.stevenagefcfoundation.com



Stevenage FC Foundation
The Lamex Stadium
Broadhall Way
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG2 8RH

New Family Service

**Sunday February 11th
at 11 o'clock**

Come and join us for our new
Family Service.

A shortened service with
something for both children
and adults

- followed by a drink and
biscuit.

Hope to see you there!

