



Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is **Responsibility**

www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

9th May 2025

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

Diary Dates

Monday 12th – Thursday 15th May – Year 6 SATs Assessments
Friday 16th May – Danes and Puddlebridge Classes visit to Whipsnade Zoo
Monday 19th – Friday 23rd May – Year 6 Bikeability
Wednesday 21st May – Open afternoon (2:15pm-3:15pm)
Wednesday 4th June - Peartree Class to Stanwick Lakes
Thursday 5th June – Shackadell Class to Hertfordshire Zoo
Thursday 5th June - Year 6 to Hazard Alley
Friday 6th June – Sports Day (am)
Friday 6th June – PTFA Summer Fete 3-6pm
Tuesday 10th June – Years 5 and 6 Young First Aiders training
Thursday 12th June – PTFA Clothing Collection
Friday 13th June – Father's Day Gifts (PTFA)
Wednesday 18th June – Haffydown Class to Hertford Museum
Wednesday 25th June – Upper school singing group to perform at Stevenage Music Festival (7pm-9pm)
Thursday 26th June – Class photos
Thursday 10th July – Class Transition Day and Year 6 to secondary schools
Friday 11th July – Quiz Night
Tuesday 15th July – Whole school production at 1:30pm and 6pm
Wednesday 16th July - Whole school production at 6pm
Thursday 17th July – Rock Steady Concert
Friday 18th July – Leavers' Service 9:30am
Friday 18th July – Summer Term Ends at 1pm

Since returning from the Easter break it has been wonderful to see all the classes absorbed and engaged in their learning – this is evident throughout the school day, every day. So much has been achieved already, a taster of which is shared on our class pages.

Our value this half term is '**Responsibility**'; we have begun to explore what this means in our daily worship. We have been impressed by how the children demonstrate their understanding of responsibility throughout the school day – whether it be by lending a helping hand, looking out for their peers or the effort that they put into their learning. Please see the ideas sheets towards the end of this newsletter should you wish to explore our value at home with your child.

Yesterday, we joined the nation in celebrating the **80th anniversary of VE day**; earlier this year, Danes and Puddlebridge classes learnt all about the Second World War in their history lessons, so they have a good understanding of the importance of this historical event.

As you will see from the **dates list**, we have an exciting term ahead with lots going on. A number of new dates have been added – these are shown in red on the list. Please keep checking the diary dates because further dates may be added as plans are finalised and all are subject to change.

Following the recent **sunny weather**, please be reminded of the importance of sending your child to school with a bottle of water (no juice or squash please) and a suitable sunhat. Sunscreen should be applied before school; children can reapply this in school as necessary. Our **sun safety policy** is available on our school website – please scan the QR code later in this newsletter. As always, this point in the year is particularly important for our **Year Six** pupils as they prepare to take their **SATs assessments** next week. They have worked incredibly hard throughout the year and are very well-prepared and even excited to show what they are capable of. We wish them every success and are immensely proud of them for being such wonderful and ambitious young people.

We wish everyone a happy and relaxing weekend and we look forward to seeing the children in school again on Monday.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025

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

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026

AUTUMN TERM

Tuesday 2nd September 2025 to Friday 19th December 2025

Half Term: Monday 27th October 2025 – Friday 31st October 2025

Occasional Day: Monday 24th November 2025 – **School closed**

Christmas Holidays: Monday 22nd December 2025 – Friday 2nd January 2026

SPRING TERM

Tuesday 6th January 2026 to Friday 27th March 2026

Half Term: Monday 16th February 2026 – Friday 20th February 2026

Easter Holidays: Monday 30th March 2026 – Friday 10th April 2026

Inset days – Monday 1st September 2025, Monday 5th January 2026, Monday 13th April 2026

School Meals

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

DINNER MONEY FEES

£3.55 per meal



Please be reminded that you can use the closed email address should you need to contact us out of hours.
closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

Please be reminded that Aston St. Mary's is a **NUT and SESAME FREE ZONE**. Please ensure that packed lunches do not contain any products containing nuts or sesame (including products such as Nutella, humus, tahini and sesame seeds on bread/breadsticks)



NUT AND SESAME FREE ZONE

A Thought from Reverend Jenny:

Only 'doubting' Thomas gets the label but he's not the only one to have questions and doubts about Easter! Mary Magdalene doesn't recognise the risen Jesus in the garden *until* he calls her name. Cleopas doesn't recognise the risen Jesus on the road to Emmaus *until* he breaks bread with them as he did at the Last Supper. The disciples don't recognise the risen Jesus on the beach (today's story) *until* they haul in a huge catch of fish as they did when Jesus first called them by the Sea of Galilee. Matthew's gospel tells us some of the disciples are still doubting when Jesus ascends into heaven... which seems a normal response to finding the brutally crucified, dead and buried Jesus risen and alive.

Jesus' resurrection is hard to take in but the disciples witness powerfully to this. The terrified disciples who'd run away from the cross become the confident witnesses we hear about in the Book of Acts, willingly facing persecution and death for faith in his resurrection. They stop hiding and tell everyone about Jesus, beginning in Jerusalem, travelling to the ends of the known earth, despite the deprivation, danger and suffering. Their evident faith, peace and joy has led millions of Christians in every age to believe in worship and serve the risen Jesus, including us today. If faith could be proved it would be in the evidence of two thousand years of changed lives - surely millions of millions can't all be deluded!

No-one can prove or disprove the Christian faith - we can get on with the job Jesus has given us to do of helping others know God's life-giving peace and love, building God's kingdom on earth as in heaven.

House Points

Canterbury



194

St. Paul's



221

St. Albans



183

Coventry



197

Notices

Quiz Night – Friday 11th July



We are very excited to be able to run a quiz night again this term. This is a fun evening where teams compete in tables of up to eight people (adults only). Bring your own food and drink. £6 per person and raffle on the night. Tables are limited due to space in the school hall. If you would like to join us, please email:

closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Kyra who recently passed her Grade 2 singing with distinction.

We are so proud of you, Kyra.



During the summer months, we would like to remind you of the importance of applying sun cream before school. Should this need to be reapplied in school, your child can do so themselves. Children are not allowed to share sun cream. Also, please ensure that your child has a sun hat for sunny days. Broad-brimmed, bucket style or legionnaire hats are recommended to adequately protect the face, neck, ears and cheeks. Please scan the QR code to view our sun safety policy.



Times Table Rockstars



We are so impressed by the progress being made by many children in Year Two upwards in securing their recall of multiplication facts using Times Tables Rockstars. Children in Year Four will soon be taking their multiplication check – this is a government test for all pupils in Year Four. The expectation is that, by the end of Year Four, children are fluent up to 12 x 12. We now have many children achieving this level of fluency by the end of Year Three or even Year Two – regular practise on TTRS really is the key to success.

Keep up the great work – securing fluency really does impact positively upon learning across the maths curriculum.

ASTON ST MARY'S

FREE
ENTRY

Summer fete

3PM-
6PM

FRIDAY
6TH JUNE

BOUNCY CASTLES
FOOT DARTS
GAME STALLS
BBQ
AND MORE!



ASTON ST MARY'S
PTFA

VE Day – 80th Anniversary Celebrations



The children enjoyed a fantastic afternoon in celebration of the 80th anniversary of VE day. Thank you to Miss Myers for organising the event and to the PTFA and Mrs Evans for their help with the street party picnic. Well done to the winners and runners up of our VE Day Art competitions:

KS2 Winner: Theo K.
KS2 Runner-up: Lily Rose

KS1/FS Winner: Evelyn
KS1/FS Runner-up: Raife



Class News

Shackadell Class

We have been learning all about **lifecycles** in Shackadell class over the last two weeks. We started off by learning about the lifecycle of butterflies, ladybirds and frogs. Then moved onto learning about the human lifecycle. During this week, we were excited to bring in and share photos of ourselves as babies. We looked at all of the ways that we have changed. We talked about what we are able to do now that we are 4 and 5 years old compared to when we were babies.



We read '**When I Am Big**' by Maria Dek. We thought about what we want to be able to do or the kinds of jobs we would like to have when we are older. We drew pictures and wrote sentences about this.



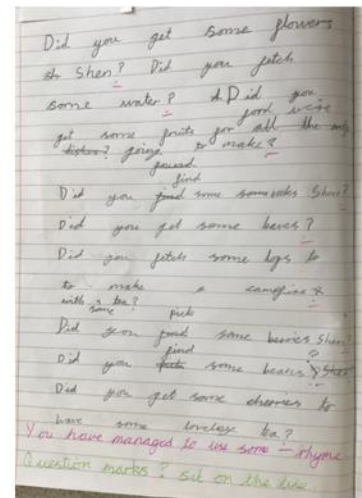
We had a wonderful day when we were all able to bring in a doll or soft toy to care for all day. We enjoyed taking part in baby yoga and taking our buggies on the daily mile. We made sure to feed and burp our babies. We also changed their nappies. We set up a baby clinic and were midwives in it, looking after the new mums.



Class News

Peartree Class

We have been so busy, as always. We are all enjoying our English unit this half term. We are looking at the traditional **Chinese folk tale of The Magic Paintbrush**, retold in rhyme by Julia Donaldson. This is also in line with our geography topic, where we are learning about the country **China**. We have enjoyed some role-play, acting out dialogue from Shen and the powerful emperor. Scan the QR code to watch on Seesaw. We have looked at different types of sentences and the correct punctuation as well as writing our own verses using the style in the book. We have also discussed characters' choices and our opinions of why they were made, and we have written character descriptions. Finally, we will be re-writing the rhyme in our own words to finish the unit.



I think that Shen shouldn't paint for the Emperor because he is already very wealthy and rich. Shen has promised to only paint for the poor and the emperor is rich. Some good reasons why.

He is a bad, mean person. ~~He is not kind~~ He is not kind. He is a bad person. He is rich. He is not evil. He is evil. He is old. He is greedy.

He is very rich. He is mean and greedy. He is quite bad. He's very evil. He's powerful. He's quite rude. He's very annoying. He's very selfish. A good description and you have checked your sentences and corrected them, yourself.

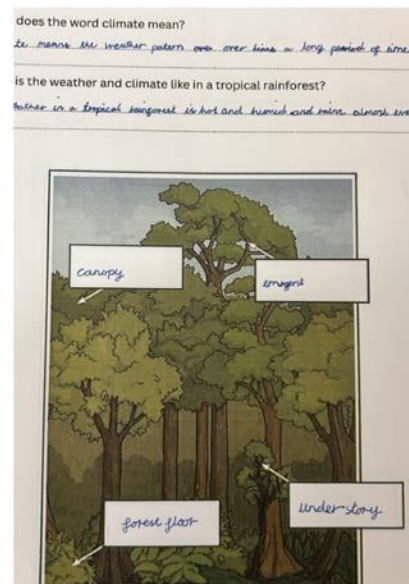
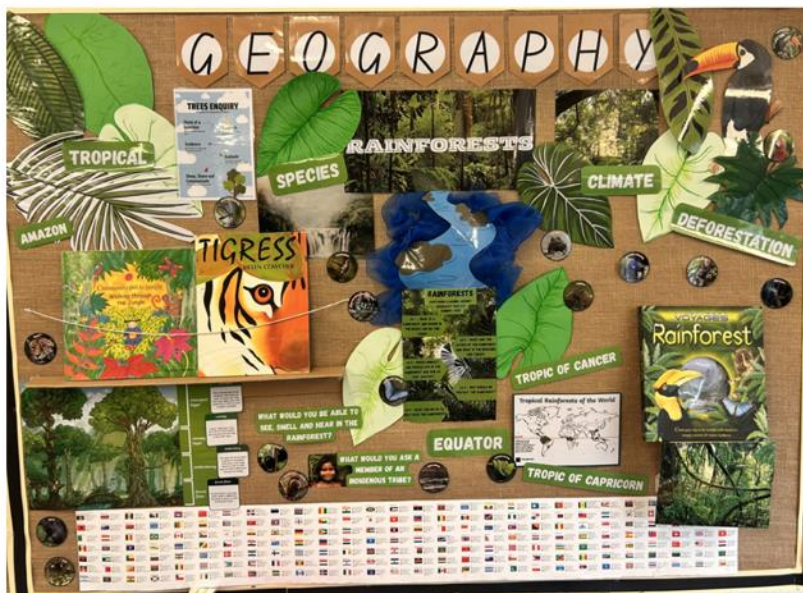
I paint a power for a lady.
A jumper teddy for a poor boy.
A lolly for a girl.
And for a baby I paint a toy.
I paint a pizza for a dog.
A bowl for a girl.
A chair for a boy.
And for a lady I paint a pearl.

I think that Shen shouldn't paint for the Emperor because he is not wealthy and he gets too what he wants and he has what he needs. Shen had promised to only paint for the poor and not for the wealthy and she must keep the promise.

Class News

Haffydown Class

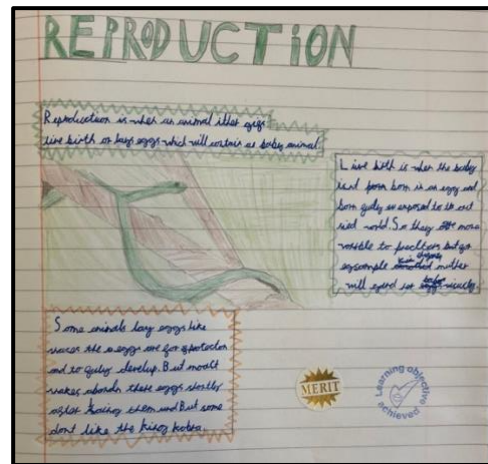
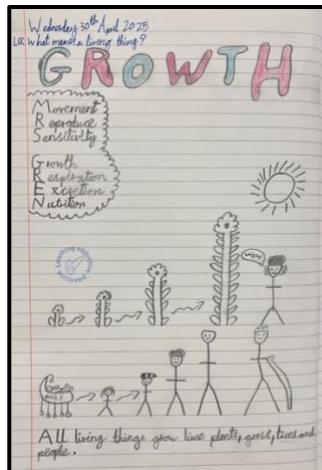
This term in Geography, we have been diving into the fascinating world of **tropical rainforests**, and the children have absolutely loved it! We began by exploring global maps, plotting the Equator as well as the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, and colouring in the parts of the world where rainforests grow. The children have also been learning about the different layers of the rainforest and the incredible animals that live in each one. There's been lots of excitement as we have discovered everything from treetop toucans to tiny forest floor insects. Next, we'll be finding out about the animals and people who live in the rainforest and how they manage to survive in such an extraordinary environment. After that, we'll be exploring why it's so important to protect these amazing habitats and thinking about what we can do to help save the rainforest for future generations. It's been wonderful to see the children so enthusiastic about learning more about our planet and how we can all make a difference.



Class News

Puddlebridge Class

In Year 4, we began our new science topic by reminding ourselves of the seven characteristics that all **living things** share, using the letters in *MRS NERG* to help us remember them - Movement, Respiration, Sensitivity, Nutrition, Excretion, Reproduction, and Growth. We looked at how these happen in both animals and plants, and how they can look a little different. To show what we had learned, we each made a colourful poster to explain one of the characteristics.



In English, we have been inspired by the story *Eye of the Wolf* by Daniel Pennac. In one lesson, we imagined what Blue Wolf might be doing in his enclosure during a chosen season. We thought carefully about how the time of year would affect what he could see, feel, and hear. Then, we wrote descriptive paragraphs using conjunctions, prepositions, and adverbials to describe his actions. We worked hard to bring our writing to life by using powerful language and thoughtful details. In another lesson, we focused on how to move through time in our writing by using different verb forms. We learned how to write in the past tense and use the past progressive to describe what was happening at a specific moment in the past. We wrote a setting description in the first person, imagining ourselves in Blue Wolf's world. We used powerful imagery to show what we could see and feel.

The sun rose over the heart of the hills. And a golden land appeared. It was a desert, but I did not know that yet. The sand shined like polished gold and the sun shined like a bright light in a dark room. What was this place? I thought wondering where I was. What are these bushes? They have no leaves and there was no trees for miles. This snow does not feel like snow. It's burning my paws!!! and it does not look like snow either.

The sun was rising over the horizon. As it did, a ray of bright light shined me so much I nearly fainted. I was shocked. The yellow snow was shimmering in front of my stunned eyes. With this much heat, I know the snow was going to melt but it didn't! In fact, it looked like it was completely fire!

There was nothing but yellow snow and my friends got about a dozen miles. This snow was really hot to be snow, so I wasn't entirely sure if it was sand, but I didn't mind.

Blue wolf roamed around, back and forth, in his enclosure. The scorching sun burnt his skin beneath his thick coat. He didn't expect it to be this hot, and yearned to be back in Alaska. But he couldn't, now that he was in a zoo. He watched as all the other animals denounced all the space they had. His scar on his left eye was stinging with pain. He just yearned he could be back in Alaska.

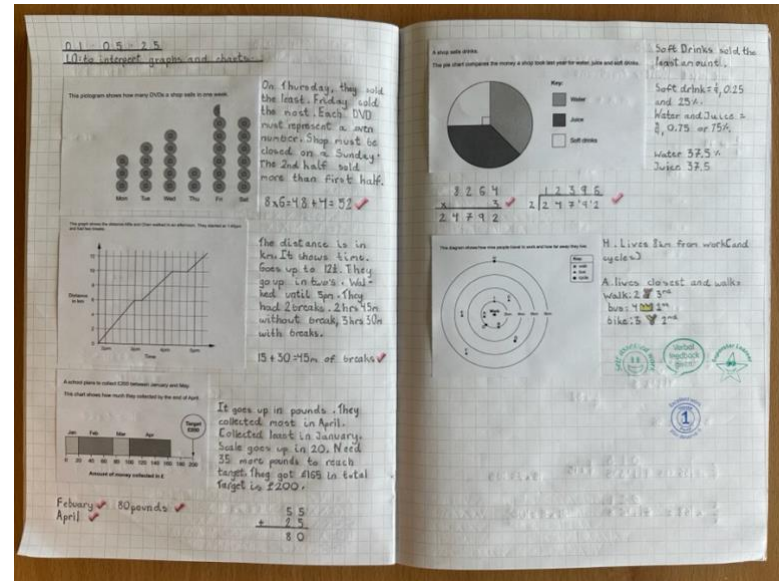
Class News

Danes Class

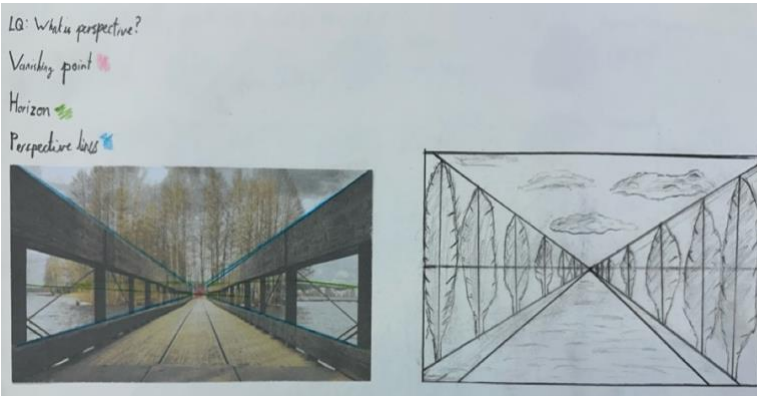
In maths, we have been developing our understanding of **statistical reasoning**. We enjoyed looking at a range of different graphs and charts and interpreting them. We were challenged to record as much information as we could.



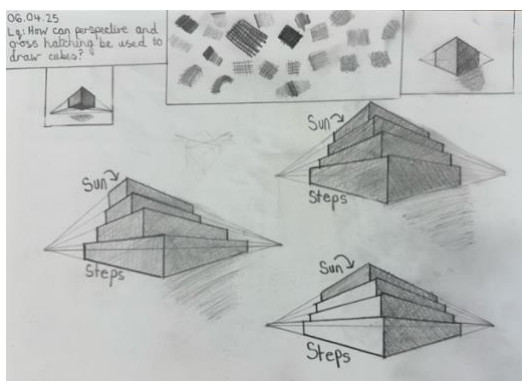
We have been enjoying **'Wisp: A Story of Hope'** for the past couple of weeks in our English learning. It is a beautiful book full of metaphors and vivid imagery. We had a go at writing our own description using this illustration from the book. This is Connor's powerful writing.



I can see the dark clouds and the dark gloomy water waiting to be your demise, or even the damp boat that is shedding tears or the waves running to the shore. Then silence. This weird upbeat energy almost like an aura. One mysterious aura. The curiosity inside me grew bigger every time I took a step forward and then, I stopped. The aura had caught me. I felt hopeless. But then I could hear the paranoid wailing sirens starting to get closer. Close. Really close.



To support our historical learning about the **Mayans**, we have been looking at how **perspective** is used to sketch realistic and proportional drawings. We learnt about how vanishing points and horizon lines are used. It was interesting to note also how perspective lines can be identified in photos. Have a look at pieces from our learning journey so far. Next week, we will be sketching our very own Mayan temples using the skills we have learnt so far – we're very excited!



RESPONSIBILITY

HOME SCHOOL VALUES

This term we will be focussing in school on the value **RESPONSIBILITY**. We hope your family will find these ideas helpful as you explore the value and have fun together.

TALK TOGETHER about Responsibility

We all have gifts, abilities and talents (the word talent originated from the word used to describe a gift of money in the Bible story opposite). We have a **responsibility** to use our talents for the good of others not just ourselves. Sometimes this will be enjoyable and fun but sometimes it will be hard work and might involve making sacrifices.

- What are your special talents?
- How are you using your talents to help others?



FAMILY FOCUS

Buried Treasure

When the man in the story buried the 'talents' that he'd been given, it didn't do him or anyone else any good! Challenge each member of the family to write down 2 talents that they recognise in each of the others. When you all share what you've written (there may be some surprises!) decide how these talents could be even further developed and used for the good of others.

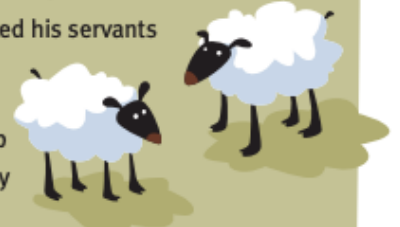


READ TOGETHER... The Parable of the Talents

A 'talent' in the time that this story was written was a large sum of money.

Jesus told a story about a master who had three servants. He was going away for a long time. So he called his three servants to him and gave each a share of his money. To the first he gave five talents, to the second he gave two and to the third, one talent. The master wanted his servants to make the best use they could of his money while he was away.

When the master finally returned home he asked his servants how they had used the talents they had been given. The first servant had doubled his money to ten talents by buying a flock of sheep and selling all the lambs. The master was really pleased. With a big smile on his face he said, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have proved yourself trustworthy with little, now I will give you even more **responsibility**."



The second had used his gifts as a potter, bought some clay, made some pots and sold them. Now he had four talents.

Again his master was delighted. "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have proved yourself trustworthy with little, now I will give you even more **responsibility**."

But the servant who had been given just one talent had hidden it. Quietly, he told his master that he was afraid and had buried his talent in the ground in case he lost it. The face of his master became angry. "You lazy servant. You could at least have put the money in the bank and gained a little interest for when I returned." And he ordered the one talent to be taken from him and given to one of the other servants.

Jesus wanted us to understand that however much money, or whatever talents or abilities we have been given, we each have a **responsibility** to make the most of these things, otherwise we risk losing them altogether.

Bible story based on Matthew 25:14-30



QUIZ Growing Talents

You have been given 1 talent. If you double it in one year, and each year double it again, after four years you would have 16 talents!



After.. 1 yr = 2, 2 yrs = 4, 3 yrs = 8, 4 yrs = 16

How many talents would you have after 4 years if you started with 2 or 3 or even 5 or 10?



After.. 1 yr = ..., 2 yrs = ..., 3 yrs = ..., 4 yrs = ...



HOME-SCHOOL CHALLENGE

Budding Businesses

The Parable of the Talents is about making the most of what you have for others.

Why not use £1 (or even £5 if you can afford it) from your pocket money and see how many times you can multiply it. Decide on a good cause that would benefit most from your gift.

For example;

- you could buy some card and use stencils to make gift tags to sell for Christmas
- clean the cars of family friends or relatives
- buy ingredients to make biscuits or cakes to sell



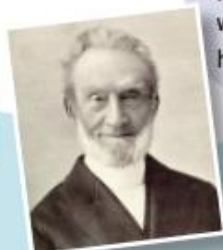
THINK TOGETHER Words of Wisdom

"With great power,
comes great **responsibility**"
Spider-man



HALL OF FAME

George Muller



As a teenager growing up in Germany, George felt confused about what he wanted to do with his life. He often stole money from his parents to buy alcohol, got drunk and ended up getting arrested for breaking the law.

One Saturday in November 1826, George and his good friend Beta were invited to the house of a Christian for a special meeting. People read from the Bible, sang songs of worship to God and prayed. George wrote in his diary, 'I have found the treasure I have been seeking all my life.' He was 21 years old.

Soon after this George sensed God was calling him to become a missionary, but his father was so angry he refused to pay for his training. From this point George learned to trust God to provide for his needs.

When he moved to England and visited Bristol, George saw children on the streets with no homes to go to and no food to eat. He felt an overwhelming sense of **responsibility** to do something for them. He rented and bought large houses for the children to live in, ensured they were well fed and taught them to read and write. He never asked for money. Instead, George prayed and found that people were moved by God to give things that could be sold and money to pay the rent. The money kept coming - sometimes a sixpence from a child, sometimes £5000 from a businessman!

As each child in his orphanages became old enough to move out, George would pray with them, placing a Bible in their right hand and a coin in the left. He explained that if they held on to what was in their right hand, God would always make sure there was something in the other hand as well.



FASCINATING FACTS



Responsible Shopping

Fairtrade® began in England in 1992. The company was built on a belief that it is the **responsibility** of richer nations to ensure that workers are paid a fair price for their labour and the goods they produce, wherever in the world they live.

One of the first groups of workers to benefit were banana growers. Fairtrade® bananas first appeared on our supermarket shelves in 1994 and now 1 in 4 bananas sold in the UK comes from a Fairtrade® producer. Across the world people spend £10 billion per year on bananas.

Sylvie's family grew bananas in Ecuador. Her father used to sell bananas at the local market and barely earned enough to buy food and clothes for his family. But, working with Fairtrade, he and other farmers in the villages nearby were able to sell their crops across the world and they made enough money to build a school and a Medical Centre. Sylvie and her friends went to school each day. Now that same school has computers and its pupils are able to learn about other children all over the world! Sylvie was really happy to be one of the first in her village to go to school every day and went on to become a teacher herself.

