

THIS WEEK AT ST FAITH'S

30th April 2021

Whilst I was happily building Lego models with my grandson last weekend, I reflected on the fact that despite great advancements in technology and changes in lifestyles, some pastimes haven't changed since I was a boy. I was reminded of this again when I witnessed the thrill and excitement of the Year 3s playing Beyblades on the table tennis tables this week. The name of the toy may have changed, but the concept of propelling spinning tops on to a table, causing them to randomly collide and fly off in all directions, brought as much pleasure to the St Faith's children as it did to me and my school friends many years ago. I stood and watched the Year 3 children for a while. They laughed and joked and became totally engrossed in the game, hardly knowing I was there beside them. What a lovely example of harmless, collective fun and one of those immeasurable and memorable activities which make childhood so special. And it didn't involve a computer!





Year 8 English

Also without using a computer, this week Year 8 pupils have been reading '*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*', by Mildred D Taylor, a semi-autobiographical novel set in Mississippi in the 1930s. This English project began in school during the Michaelmas Term and continued throughout lockdown, in the Lent term. Perhaps for that reason, the story of an African American family, united in coping with incredibly hard times, resonated with Year 8. The novel's themes of justice, race and discrimination are also very relevant to the time in which we live. Towards the end of the book there is a description of one of the main characters sent to join a 'Chain Gang' – convicts who were forced into hard labour such as road construction. Such gangs were renowned for their songs which created a sense of togetherness, motivation and rhythm to the brutal work. Keen to explore how the use of song motivated the exhausted workers, Mrs Davis challenged her class to write their own chain gang songs, and then took them outside, to act out the work of a chain gang and to perform their songs.

<https://youtu.be/umMHvrEm6IE>

Rebecca Project

This morning, I called in to see a Year 8 English class present their project on Rebecca, by Daphne du Maurier. I was greatly impressed by the quality of work as well as the depth of understanding the pupils showed as they spoke to me about the plot and characters. Here is a short film to show you a selection of their work.

<https://youtu.be/P87JJyIHVTo>

Assembly on Duke of Edinburgh

On Monday, Mrs Davies, gave a virtual assembly to all pupils about the life of the late Duke of Edinburgh whose interests and work included conservation, environmentalism and sustainability. The Duke was of course very well known for his belief in the capability of young people and the importance of developing leadership skills, a belief shared by and reflected in our school. He was also an innovator and once famously quoted, '*Anything not invented by God was invented by an engineer.*' As part of the assembly, Mrs Davies described the Duke's visit to St Faith's in 1999, to formally open Ashburton Hall. Current parents may view the virtual assembly [here](#).

Captain Sir Tom 100 Challenge

Today would have been the 101st birthday of Captain Sir Tom Moore, whose simple message of hope, '*tomorrow will be a good day*', inspired and brought comfort to millions of people during the pandemic. Walking 100 laps of his garden, Captain Sir Tom raised an incredible £38.9 million for the NHS Covid-19 appeal.

[The Captain Tom 100 Challenge](#) involves taking on a challenge based around the number 100 and completing that challenge between Friday 30th April and Monday 3rd May, raising funds for [The Captain Tom Foundation](#), another charity, or doing it just for fun. Perhaps reading 100 pages of a book, giving 100 compliments or walking for 100 minutes – the choices are endless.

Today the Maths department embraced the spirit of the challenge by solving mathematical puzzles based around the number 100. Meanwhile, at home Archie in Year 4 has been inspired by the challenge to sleep in a bivvy bag under a tarpaulin cover for 100 nights in his garden. So far, he has raised an impressive £1300, having braved some overnight temperatures as low as minus 4 degrees centigrade! Night 100 is July 4th when Archie's Dad is hoping to take him up Snowdon or Scafell to sleep under the stars and complete the challenge in style. Today, we heard that ITN may be covering Archie's challenge in their local news programme this evening!



We certainly do not expect everyone to follow Archie's example by camping out in their garden, but we encourage pupils who want to celebrate Captain Sir Tom's life and legacy, to choose a 100 challenge to take part in. We would love to hear about the challenges completed and will aim to showcase the children's achievements in school and the newsletter in future weeks, so please send any information and photographs to Miss Kennerley: ekennerley@stfaiths.co.uk. Thank you.



Highly Commended Artwork

We were delighted to learn last week that Matilda in Year 3 was awarded Highly Commended in the National IAPS (Independent Association of Prep Schools) Art competition in the Year 3&4 category. Matilda has been awarded an Amazon gift voucher and her art work will be displayed at IAPS headquarters in Leamington Spa. Here is Matilda proudly showing off her Red Panda on canvas.

Finally

A reminder that Monday is a Bank Holiday, so this weekend is slightly longer than usual and school will resume on Tuesday morning. Whatever your plans for the Bank Holiday, I wish you a very pleasant weekend. I'm looking forward to seeing my grandchildren again and this weekend, I might even introduce them to Beyblades!

With all good wishes,

Nigel Helliwell

