

PHOENIX CLASS END OF TERM 4 NEWSLETTER



Dear Parents and Carers,

I don't know about you, but to me, Term 4 seems to have gone past in a flash! There has been lots going on in class and around the school, and the children have kept a positive and enthusiastic attitude throughout. Our attendance numbers in Phoenix have been ok, with just a few periods of absence for some children.

Our class topic has been the study of the ancient Maya people. This civilisation study provided us with many different areas of learning that we could cover across various subjects. The Geography side of things got us exploring the atlases and looking more closely at Central America (or Mesoamerica as it used to be called) and the countries that saw the lives of the Maya. They should know these five main countries – please ask them. We also looked at the landscape and climate of this area of the world and compared it with cities in England. For the history side, we began by finding out how the area was discovered, explored and attacked by the Spanish during the 15 and 16 hundreds. Through this learning, the children considered the different implications of such acts, and we discussed these issues passionately in PSHE sessions. We also looked at how artefacts can tell us a great deal about the past. We became archaeologists and came to many conclusions about how the Maya lived.

We learnt about the religious beliefs of the Maya. Phoenix were shocked to discover the details on sacrifices and blood-letting, both to please the many different Gods. This was especially important to the Maya Sun God, as the ancient people thought that the sun would not rise if they didn't show their honour and respect in this way! Masks were worn for various reasons back in those days, and the children in Phoenix designed, created and evaluated their own Maya masks for our classroom wall. They looked great.

In connection with the popular Maya crop of cacao, our class reading book and comprehension text as well as our inspiration for writing in English lessons has been Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. The children have been thoroughly enjoying this wild and wacky story and it has given opportunities for creative writing on settings and characters, and non-chronological reports. We even got the chance to word process our reports using the laptops over the last week of term.

In RE we studied the 'Followers of God'. Ideas for our learning came from the Understanding Christianity resource. We first looked at the Bible story of Noah. The class were very good at considering the thoughts and feelings that Noah may have experienced. We went on to study how God's promise in the Bible has influenced people to make their own promises to God. From here, we also looked at the marriage ceremony and how people make their promises to each other.

Towards the end of this term we have also watched a great interactive concert by a brass trio. These visiting musicians were excellent and really engaged and educated the children in the arts of the brass instrument. Also, Phoenix had a visitor who worked with us on song writing. This is something that will go towards a singing event later in the school year alongside other school. This should be really exciting.

I do hope you enjoy your Easter break and the chance for a rest. Please try to keep up with regular reading and the practising of times table facts where you can.

Best wishes
Mr Osler

