

So begin the final terms of Year 6.

Perhaps the most dominant feature of this first term is the SATs. These will be held in the week beginning 8th May and will be spread across four mornings. The timetable is as follows:

Monday 8 th	Reading Test
Tuesday 9 th	Spelling and Grammar
Wednesday 10 th	Maths: Paper 1 - arithmetic Paper 2 – reasoning
Thursday 11 th	Maths: Paper 3 reasoning

The tests will be held in the classroom under closely monitored conditions. There is no need for the pupils to worry about SAT's but we are in the middle of a sensible amount of preparation in order to increase confidence and technique.

By far the most important thing in the SAT's week is to make sure that everyone is well fed, gets plenty of sleep and most importantly, arrives in school in plenty of time.

In spite of the SAT's, all subject lessons continue this term as normal.

The English work will develop in both depth and range while grammatical skills will become more refined, being applied with more consideration to create different effects.

Alongside this, we will explore how to improve writing in other subjects such as science or history, to ensure that the quality of written work is consistent across the curriculum.

A highlight for me is the study of Macbeth which we will begin shortly after the SAT's are over- jolly exciting.

Maths will continue to focus on problem solving skills using the bar model while moving more deeply into data collection and analysis. This is an excellent opportunity to refine independent skills in preparation for secondary school.

There are some key skills which can be developed at home for those who are brave enough to face a Year 6 child approaching their mathematical peak. Tables remain fundamental to quicker, more efficient maths and where there are still weaknesses in the basics (up to 12x) these should be rehearsed at every opportunity. Similarly, being able to count is critical so try counting on and back from any number in multiples of 100, 1000, 10,000, 25's 75's as well as simple decimals such as 0.5, 0.25 and 0.75. On a similar theme, counting in fractions is an excellent mind expander. Try counting on and back in three quarters for starters. Now try it from 12.6...

When problem solving, these are some useful questions to ask at home:

- Have you extracted all the information?
- What else do you now know?
- Can you draw it on a bar model?
- What questions could you ask in class tomorrow?

In science we will now take a look at natural selection and evolution. Although the superficial principles are relatively easy to understand, developing a meaningful understanding is quite challenging so we will step slowly and carefully to begin with. It also raises some interesting philosophical debates, especially when comparing scientific and religious views on the matter which is something we will address sensitively and openly.

Geography and history will link together as we begin a broader topic which will study lots of the elements that we will encounter on the Isle of Wight residential trip including the Battle of Trafalgar, erosion and the English Civil War.

Art gives way to DT in which we will be designing and making moving buggies which is an excellent opportunity to apply maths skills in a really fun and creative way.

If there is time, we will return to art and use sculpey clay (*a polymer clay that moulds like plasticine then bakes hard in the oven*) to make some awesome little monstery type things.

ICT will head back into filming to really push our skills forwards as we complete some much more technical projects.

PE will develop skills in batting and fielding this term. We will look at different techniques that are applicable to different sports such as rounders and cricket and learn lots of different mini games. Sounds like an excellent cue for two months of debilitating rain...

Other News:

My intention this year is to use our studies of Macbeth in English as the basis for the end of year play. This is highly experimental but with a fair wind and the grace of the fates it could work rather well. I have to be cautious with setting the dates to make sure that I avoid the variety of transition evening events that take place at the different secondary schools at that end of the year. Similarly, the Year 6 leaver's service will take place at a similar time but I need to make sure there is no clash of diaries.

I will inform you of the dates once I have ironed out the logistics. Thank you in advance for your patience.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Mr. Andy Silvester