

THE AMERICAS CLASS NEWSLETTER

SPRING

Journey of Discovery: 'Island Vibes and Ancient Tribes'

Welcome back to another exciting term in The Americas Class! We've sailed south after exploring the northern-most parts of our continents and can't wait to explore the culture and customs of Central America. This term, we will be saying 'Aloha' to Hawaii, island hopping around the Caribbean, musing Mexico's main attractions and travelling through time to uncover the many miraculous mysteries of the ancient Maya.



Writing

In English, we are going to be focusing on narrative writing using the wordless text, 'The Arrival'. The children might recognise the author – Shaun Tan – from their work on 'The Lost Thing' last year! Through studying this text, we will develop our sentence skills before using these to write our own stories using 'The Write Stuff' approach. With a combination of 'sentence stacking' lessons to immerse ourselves in rich vocabulary and imagination, and 'experience days' to build a secure yet engaging context to our learning, our independent writing will be a celebration of our journey as growing authors. Later in the term, we will be learning about the experiences of refugees in America, writing speeches to convey our points of view.

Reading

In Book Talk sessions, we will be studying 'The Girl of Ink and Stars' by Kiran Millwood Hargrave. Through reciprocal reading, we will be focussing on 2 chapters a week – one read by the children and one by an adult. In between, we will be using a variety of follow-up activities to explore what we have read and answering comprehension questions to reinforce understanding. For Snack and Story, we are reading 'The Polar Bear Explorers' Club by Alex Bell. Ask your children about either of these books – we are really enjoying them so far! Alongside this, children should also be independently selecting 'Reading for Pleasure' books, which should go to and from school. We encourage children to select a variety of texts and authors that challenge their reading ability and nurture their love of reading both at school and at home. Please do encourage your children to read during the week. Whilst many children may be reluctant to read aloud at this age, please still discuss what your child has read with them. It is important that they understand what they are reading. Please encourage your child to fill in their reading record with the book, page numbers read and a comment/ reflection on their reading. Whilst we understand that it is not always possible for children to write in a comment, please encourage them to do so at least 3 times a week. We are also happy for you to write comments in their reading records, so feel free to do so. It is important that the children bring their reading logs to school every day.

Maths

In Maths, we will be developing our Multiplication and Division skills to apply to more complicated concepts within our next Fractions unit. From there, we will look at decimals and percentages before moving on to perimeter and area. We will continue to regularly complete arithmetic challenges to support fluency and confidence across the maths curriculum. This would be effectively reinforced if children were to continue to



practise their times tables at home. Although we will often place multiplication and division as a priority in both our Maths lessons and morning arithmetic, we have noticed a decline in instant recall of tables (of which last year was particularly strong). Times Table Rock Stars log ins are back online and a recommended 15 minutes a day would really benefit all areas of Maths this term and allow children to progress without getting caught up with the struggle of recalling basic times tables, especially when they worked so hard to make them secure for their MTC last year.

PE

This term, we have PE lessons on Tuesday afternoons and swimming lessons on Wednesday mornings. P.E kit should consist of white or green Risby P.E tops, a plain round-necked sweatshirt (no hoods, buttons, zips or logos) of any colour and black joggers or shorts. Earrings must be removed, along with any watches – no other jewellery should be worn in or out of P.E. Swimming kits should consist of suitable swimwear, **a swimming hat** and a towel. Goggles are permitted but not recommended as basic lifesaving skills are taught and in the event of an actual water-related emergency it would be unlikely that children would be wearing them.



Music

We will continue to have our clarinet lessons every Tuesday morning. If your child brings their clarinet home, please help them to remember to bring their clarinet to school every Tuesday. Alternatively, the children are welcome to bring their clarinets into school on a Monday and store them over night in school if that helps.

Uniform

Children are reminded to come to school wearing appropriate uniform. This includes our Risby jumper/cardigan and either a white or green polo shirt, shirt or blouse and black/grey trousers, shorts or skirts/summer dresses. Socks and tights should be black, white or grey with appropriate closed toed, black school shoes (**not boots or trainers**). Long hair needs to be fully tied back with a plain hair tie and a simple green/black hairband may be worn. Small stud earrings are permitted, but no other jewellery is to be worn to school. Nail varnish, make up and hair dye of any kind are also not permitted. In Year 5, children are allowed to bring a rucksack to school, instead of a Risby book bag, but this is for daily necessities only: it does not include toys or trinkets of any kind from home in case they are damaged or lost.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your child's learning or their time in school, please do get in touch. You can catch us briefly at the door in the morning, send an email to head@risbyprimary.com (which will be forwarded onto us), call the school and leave a message, or come and speak to us at the end of the day, after we have dismissed the class.

Key Dates

Tuesday 10th February: Parent Consultations
Thursday 12th February: Parent Consultations
Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February: Half Term
Wednesday 25th March: Class Visit to Cadbury World (further details to follow)
Monday 30th March – Friday 10th April: Easter Holiday
Monday 13th April: First day of Summer Term

