

Head of Division Thoughts:

It was sad to see the end of our wonderful Indian summer midway through the week, but we must be grateful for the extended period of sunshine that we have had. As I sit in my office, I can see the daily changes in the trees as autumn approaches and it reminds me of the cycles we live in. In education we become very institutionalised, working from a timetable, in terms and with key dates permanently in our diaries. It has been strange this year adding dates to the diary for events that I am unsure whether they will happen. I hate uncertainty and very much like to be in control, so these strange times we are living in have required me to change my mindset. I know I have struggled with certain aspects of the current situation and I saw the quote: "The goal isn't to let go of all your negative feelings; that is impossible. The goal is to change your response to them." This resonated with me and whilst I cannot control external factors around me, I can change how I deal with them. This has been the theme of my assembly with Junior Division this week. The young people in our care not only have to deal with their academic studies and finding a balance between life and their schoolwork, but they are also seeing and hearing a lot of other information that may concern them or generate questions. I have been encouraging them to find the positive and control their responses in a positive way.

It was a real delight to see the Year 7 3D plant structures they created for science this week. Such a tremendous effort went into these, so well done to all of you. I look forward to seeing more of the JD students work over the coming weeks.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.

Rebecca Smith

Curriculum Notes:

Here are some highlights from some of their subjects:

English: **Year 7** are completing a reading and writing assessment in class. They have also been set an exciting Spy homework project which will be completed alongside our class novel. **Year 8** have begun to read the novel 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' by John Boyne. Their previous homework, to research facts and information about WW2, has proved invaluable to their understanding of the contextual factors in the novel.

French: **Year 7** had their first vocabulary test and have been learning the French alphabet. **Year 8** have been learning about different types of TV programmes.

History: **Year 7** have been involved in "Show and tell" following last week's lesson on sources. Interesting family heirlooms have been brought in to share with the class. They have also learnt what Britain was like in 1066. **Year 8** have been learning about Martin Luther and the German Reformation and have been introduced to Henry VIII.

Science: **Year 8** practised their exam technique by trying past exam questions from the chemical reactions topic.

RE: **Year 7** have finished the History of Beechwood and are learning for a test. **Year 8** watched a DVD on the life of a medieval monk and read the Life of St. Benedict. It would be beneficial to visit an Abbey or Monastery - local suggestions include Bayham Abbey (open Sat and Sun 10-4pm free as not manned by English Heritage Staff), Battle Abbey - this is English Heritage, but members can take up to 6 children free - perhaps a socially distanced day out could be planned between families? Aylesford Friary - this is a working Friary with a small community of monks that live there. If it becomes difficult to go out in these Covid times, there are also virtual tours of monastic sites that can be found online.

Textiles:

Maths: **Year 7: Set one** have been revising averages, graphs and correlation. They have had their chapter one test. *Set two* focussed mainly on long multiplication and calculating mean mode and median for a set of data. **Year 8: Set one** focused on calculating using indices as well as rounding and estimation. *Set two* have been looking at powers, roots and brackets, making calculations using priority operations. They have also been revising multiples and factors, using factor trees to write numbers as a product of its prime factors.

Geography: **Year 7** students have been developing their map skills and knowledge of the key physical and human aspects of the British Isles. **Year 8** have had fun exploring their own knowledge of China and developing their map-making and annotation skills.

Drama: **Years 7 and 8** have continued their study of the History of Theatre, focusing on the Commedia dell'Arte. We looked at the stock characters, who they represent and how they typically behaved. The students performed mimes to embody these characters.

German: **Year 7** have been learning about higher numbers. They have also looked at nouns, gender & articles. **Year 8** have been learning dialogue to order food and buying souvenirs and tackling longer reading tasks.

Art: **Year 7** are investigating observational drawing and how people perceived images, how images can change from person to person depending on what they identify first within the subject. **Year 8** are looking at watercolour and painting drawing from direct observation.

DT: **Year 7** have been designing their Pop-Up cards. **Year 8** will be designing their Acrylic Jewellery using 2D Design on the computer.

Food Technology: **Year 7** have got to grips with the cookers and how they work. They completed a cooker test by making a hot chocolate and a slice of toast. **Year 8** have made Pizza making their own dough and tomato sauce - a great way to start the weekend.

Music: **Year 7** have finished the baseline assessments and moved onto note values and rhythms. We played rhythm games, used flashcards, did some musical maths and rhythm grids. **Year 8** have been re-capping rhythms and note values: rhythmic actions, games and flashcards, then rhythmic dictation. Discussion of what a scale and a chord is. The students then played a scales and chords on the boomwhackers, ending with 'Do a deer' from the Sound of Music.

Student thoughts:

Each week I speak to students about how they are feeling and what they are enjoying. I also overhear some of their conversations. Some of the quotes of the week:

"I feel like I have been here since pre-prep....in a good way."

"I really enjoy Technology; we never did anything like that in my old school."

"I used to hate PE, but it has been really fun since I got here."

Achievements / Extra-Curricular Activities:

It has been lovely to see many JD students taking part in our clubs and activities. It is never too late to join though, so please encourage your children to sign up to what is on offer.

Well done to Amelie B, Mia and Lilith in Year 8 for winning our lockdown RE competition. Fantastic entries, so congratulations.

Maths – A reminder that the Maths Department sell scientific calculators for £7 should your child need one. This is cheaper than most high street shops.