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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Year 5! We have had a great start to the term and it has been lovely to see the children settle in so well.

Our enquiry question this term is 'What story does every picture tell?' and we will be exploring this primarily through our geography, art and DT lessons, and all three of our chosen texts for English and guided reading complement this theme too. We will be developing our geographical skills by learning to 'read' photographs of given locations to learn about their populations and physical features, and learn how to analyse and represent climatic and demographic data of these regions to extend our understanding further. We will compare and contrast photographs and physical and demographic data of from selected regions around the world with photographs and data from our own locality.

In English, we have started the term by focussing on the picture book 'The Matchbox Diary' by Paul Fleischman. This thought-provoking picture book is narrated by an elderly man who tells his great grand-daughter about his migration from rural Italy as a young boy in the early part of the 20th Century. This text is being explored as part of a whole-school focus on diversity and belonging, to fit with our 'Well-Rounded' school value. In Year Five, as well as exploring these themes around diversity, we will also be using its striking artwork to inspire descriptive writing of characters and settings in our English lessons, and writing our own diary pieces inspired by objects we have collected. In addition to this text, we will be using another inspiring picture book, 'Flotsam' by David Weisner to inspire our writing. This book tells the story of a boy who finds an underwater camera on the beach and develops the film to reveal vivid and surreal images of fantastic underwater worlds, and surprising portraits of children from other times and places who have also discovered this magical underwater camera. Using the Talk for Writing approach, we will compose 'back stories' for these characters. Our third text is an illustrated chapter book, 'The Invention of Hugo Cabret' by Brian Selznick. We are reading this book as a whole class, and using comprehension questions on each chapter to develop our retrieval and inference skills. To appreciate the stunning illustrations, the book is being shown on the interactive whiteboard, but the children are also able to physically read copies of the text one between two. If your child has their own copy of this book at home, they may want to bring it in for their own personal use during these sessions. Please ensure all books sent into school are named. In Year 5, we teach grammar and punctuation both discretely through our Early Morning Grammar sessions which happen twice a week, and as part of our standard English lessons. Spelling patterns are taught discretely throughout the week. Please support your child with their spellings by encouraging them to use and practise the words we will be uploading onto Seesaw weekly.

In Maths, our focus will be upon number and place value this term. We are continuing with our use of Power Maths. This scheme takes a mastery approach, and enables the children to participate in whole-class activities and discussions about different aspects of number. We will also be continuing to provide children with opportunities to practise their arithmetic and times tables skills through our Early Morning Maths sessions which happen three mornings a week at the start of the school day. Please can you support your child as much as possible with practising their times tables outside of school. All of them will continue to have a TT Rockstars account. Please see one of us if you require help accessing this.

In Science, we will be investigating Forces, and conducting a range of experiments to build on the children's understanding of the force of gravity acting between the Earth and the falling object, the effects of air resistance, water resistance and friction that act between moving surfaces and the fact that some mechanisms, including levers, pulleys and gears, allow a smaller force to have a greater effect.

In our art and DT lessons, we will start by drawing detailed images from observation, before moving on to trying out different photography techniques to capture images, and also making a zoetrope.

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PE will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays this term. On Tuesdays, it's yoga. Please can all children wear their PE kits to school on these days. On Thursdays this term, our PE session is Forest School. Please ensure all children are wearing suitable clothes for the weather – please refer to the separate letter that was emailed out earlier this term for more guidance on this. We are unable to allow the children to wear any jewellery during PE, so if your child has pierced ears, please can they either not wear their earrings to school, or be able to take them out. It would be useful if they could have a small pot or bag to keep these in to ensure they do not get lost. Newly pierced ears can be taped at home on these days. If your child is unable to do PE for any reason, please inform us in writing or tell us on the gate.

In music, we will be listening to and singing songs from the Rock genre and finding out about the difference between rhythm and pulse, as well as using body percussion, untuned percussion instruments and glockenspiels to compose and improvise rhythms and simple tunes.

In PSHE, we will be focusing on positivity, respect and empathy and reinforcing children's understanding of the Zones of Regulation code. In Computing, we will be finding out about the history of moving pictures and animation, then creating our own stop motion animation movies using the ipads, based around the idea of migration, to complement one of our key texts. In French, we will be focusing on learning vocabulary about where we live). In RE, we will be studying the Christian religion, focusing on how Christians see God as well as the idea of holiness in Christianity and other religions.

Mymaths homework will be set on Fridays to be completed by the following Wednesday. Spelling homework will be uploaded onto Seesaw on Wednesdays this year, and will consist of spelling patterns taught in class discretely on that day, which will be our focus spellings over the course of that week. We will also be setting a long 'takeaway' home learning task this term to complement our enquiry question 'What story does every picture tell us?'. We will be asking Year 5 to become photo journalists and produce their own series of photos exploring the theme of diversity in Lewes – please look out for further details of this later this week. An email about this project has already been sent out and uploaded onto Seesaw – do refer to this for more information.

We would also like to remind you that we promote a Healthy Lifestyle at Western Road. We thank you for your support in ensuring children are eating healthy foods throughout the day to enable to sustain full concentration and optimise their learning experience.

We are really looking forward to teaching your children in Year 5. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to see one of us.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hamilton, Ms Callow and Mr Young –
the Year 5 Team