

Year 5/6 Newsletter

Fenstanton and Hilton
Primary School



Spring 2 2026

What we are learning about:

Our topic/theme this half term is:

Why isn't it the 'Dark Ages'?

We will be learning:

In Topic, we will be learning about the Anglo-Saxons and considering the question 'why isn't it the Dark Ages?' We will be learning about why the Saxons came to the British Isles in the 5th century and what we can learn about their civilisation. Through this we will consider why historians no longer accept the title of the Dark Ages for the period of our island's history between the Roman's leaving in 410AD and the invasion of the Normans in 1066. In Science, our topic is Light and we will consolidate previous learning by exploring the way that light behaves, including light sources, reflection and shadows. We will make predictions and investigate the relationship between light sources, objects and shadows and understand how the eye works. To complete the topic, we will extend our experience of light by looking at rainbows, prisms and bending light in water.

Key Vocabulary:

Maths – triangle, quadrilateral, pentagon, hexagon, acute, obtuse, reflex, straight, square, rectangle, isosceles, scalene, right-triangle, equilateral, cube, cuboid, prism, pyramid, x-axis, y-axis, translate, rotate, symmetry, coordinate, degree, squared, cubed

English – beginning, rising action, dilemma, falling action, resolution, ending suspense, atmosphere, semi-colon, dialogue, action, characterisation, figurative language, monster, legend, adverbial, non-chronological, passive voice, colon, subordinating conjunction

Topic – Period, era, kingdom, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Picts, Scotti, Sutton Hoo, Settlement, Danelaw, Pagan, Christianity, Hoard, Urn, Wergild

English:

In English, we will be starting with a narrative unit writing an 'overcoming a monster tale'. In class, we will be reading a Michael Morpurgo adaptation of the Saxon poem, Beowulf. The text we will be using in English is a short story about Beowulf and we will use this to explore narrative writing, using adverbials and using semi-colons to link independent clauses. After exploring the text, we will adapt our own class version of the story and then the children will write their own overcoming a monster tale. Following on from narrative writing, we will develop our non-chronological report writing skills. The text we will be using is a report about the monster in Beowulf (Grendel) and will be writing our own reports about a mythological beast. Our grammar focus will be subordination and varying the position of the subordinate clause, colons to link closely related clauses and using the passive voice (Y6) to create a formal tone. Y5 will create a formal tone through the use of precise language e.g. 'it's diet consists of' rather than 'it eats'.

Mathematics:

There is a strong geometry and measurement focus this half term, in maths. We have begun the term by looking at measuring and calculating area and perimeter in polygons. This has then been stretched to calculating these for compound shapes. The children have taken this learning and their understanding of 2D shapes to then begin considering volume and capacity in 3D shapes. We will also learn about measuring angles using protractors and the total of degrees on a straight line, around a point and in a range of shapes (i.e. triangles and quadrilaterals).

Another point of study this half-term will be the properties of 2D and 3D shapes and working on the four quadrants of a grid to translate, reflect and rotate shapes using coordinates.