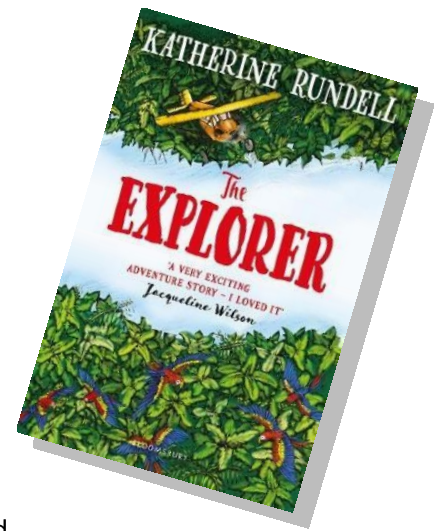


## The Explorer



Dear Parents and Children,

Happy new year to you all! I hope you have all had a wonderful festive break. After an Autumn term with lots of events and changes, it's been fantastic to welcome you back and already see how positive you are about the term ahead.

I couldn't be more excited to share our main story with Base 4 this term. *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell follows four children, the quietly adventurous Fred, the scathingly blunt Con ("It's short for Constantia, but if you call me that I'll kill you!"), along with strong-willed brother and sister, Max and Lila, who find themselves thrown together when their plane crashes in the Amazon rainforest. Being fascinated by the tales of explorers, Fred and his three new companions find themselves having to learn how to survive the vast, untamed jungle. However, without giving too much away, it seems as though someone has been there before them.

This is a beautiful book, full of wonderful language, adventure and tackling issues around friendship and conservation, which has won the Children's Book Prize, the Costa Children's Book Award and a host of other awards. If you wanted to read along at home and purchase your own copy, the ISBN is 1408882191.

Following the children's journey along the Amazon River gives us the chance to use our school topic of water to make comparisons between the river and canals, the latter of which we will be focussing on in our Learning Journey. We'll be studying our local History and how the use of canals has changed. We'll be visiting the canal in the village over the term to carry out fieldwork, studying the cantilever bridge and creating our own models in Design and Technology.

Base 4 will be swimming this term as part of the PE curriculum. This will be every Wednesday afternoon Nantwich Baths. I was delighted that every child had remembered their swimming kit in the first week and were able to take part, so please continue to bring in your kit. PE with Sportscape will continue on Thursday afternoons, so make sure that PE kit (warmer clothing included) is also in school and clearly labelled.

Homework will be given out on Friday in children's homework books, due back in on Wednesday morning. This will usually be a short activity to consolidate the learning in a subject we have studied in the week, preparatory work for learning in the coming week or to encourage children to reflect on their own wellbeing and their development as individuals and part of their communities.

Spellings are taught on Friday for children to then practice at home. These will be tested on Friday mornings with Mrs. Cador. Please make sure you continue to practice these at home. Base 4's spelling test results improved a lot over the term, so let's keep that going!

Reading every night is absolutely vital. As discussed with most parents at parents' evening, great readers make great writers! It could be a grown-up reads a more challenging book to their child and then asks questions—what is happening? What do these words mean? Why did the author use that phrase? What might happen next?—whilst the child reads a simpler book. Please also try to read a range of books

and texts with children and feel free to ask for any advice.

Times tables should also be practiced at home. Learning quick recall of times table facts is essential to help children solve more complex maths problems. Every child in Base 4 has an account on Times Table Rockstars to play games, practice their quick recall and even compete against each other (including me!). It's expected that children continue to play TTRS daily.

The broad timetable for each week is below. School gates open at 8.45am and all children are to be in school by 8.55am when the gates close, fully equipped with reading book, homework, a healthy snack and a coat for the chilly winter days. The children are given morning tasks from 8.45am to prepare for the day and start their learning, so arriving earlier gives children a good headstart. Base 4's attendance has improved too over the last half term and the children are working hard to win golden tickets for attendance. We know that sometimes missed days are unavoidable, but a child missing a day's learning and having to catch up can impact not just on the returning child, but on the rest of the class as staff help children catch up. It would be great if we aimed this term to achieve 100% attendance as many weeks as possible.

Base 4	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.45-8.55	Morning Task	Morning Task	Morning Task	Morning Task	Morning Task
9.00-10.20	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	SPaG (inc. spelling test)
Break					
10.40-12.00	English	English	English	English	French / SPaG
Lunch					
1.00-1.30	Whole School Assembly	News Assembly	Swimming	RE	Topic work
1.30-2.30	Topic Work (Science focus)	Topic Work		PE	
2.30-3.15	Topic Work		2.45pm - Class reading time		
3.15-3.30	Class Story	Class Story	Class Story		ACHIEVE assembly

Note: Topic work includes all other subjects (history, geography, computing etc. English sessions include reading, writing and SPaG and Maths includes arithmetic.

Dates for you diary:

Parents' sharing afternoon—Tuesday 29th January, 2:30-5:00pm

Reading week—w/c 4th March including World Book Day Thursday 7th March

Parents' evenings—Monday 25th and Tuesday 26th March

Finally, a personal thank you to both children and parents for such a warm welcome to the school since joining in November. I'm really proud to be teaching the children in Base 4 and of what they have achieved already. If you have any messages, worries or concerns, don't hesitate to speak to me at the gate, or if we need a longer conversation, I'm happy to speak over the phone or arrange a meeting after school.

Many thanks,

Mr. Lindop