

Easebourne World Book Day Extravaganza!

On Thursday, pupils in Year 2 were captivated by the presence of Hugh Bonneville and David Walliams as they appeared in their live lessons at the start and end of the day, to mark World Book Day. Mr Bonneville was part of Mrs Venn's cunning plan for the day, but Mr Walliams was an unexpected (but very welcome) surprise for everyone!

Hugh spent an hour online with Squirrels Class (including the children working remotely from home), reading and discussing Paddington and the first chapter of Mr Stink,



sharing the illustrations as he read. Pupils had prepared questions in their English lessons earlier in the week, without realising they were actually going to have the opportunity to ask any of them!

Hugh openly talked about his experiences as an actor, responding to a range of well-prepared questions including, 'How was the green smoke created in Mr Stink?';



"What is the food like on a television/film set?"; "How did you remain positive during lockdown?" and "What advice do you have for a budding actor/actress?".

(Interestingly, he advised against becoming an actor saying, "If you have three choices of what you would like to be or do in life and one of those is acting, choose one of the other two!"). He talked about how people on set would poke bits of food and pretend snot into his beard to make him look really disgusting in his role as Mr Stink. Everyone was in fits of laughter, totally mesmerised by Mr Bonneville.

At break time, Mrs Venn received an unexpected telephone call from Hugh, asking if it would be okay for his friend David to pop into our live afternoon session. Mrs Venn and Mrs Manning were incredibly excited for us all and managed to keep it a secret from everyone in the class until he appeared in our final live lesson of the day! Pupils, staff and parents on the call from home, were absolutely stunned as Mr Walliams took over our 2.45pm story time session!

David talked about people who inspired him to act and write, encouraging pupils to name some of his book titles. He admired the



children's costumes and carefully collaged artwork of favourite book characters, from Mr Stink to Gangsta Granny, and was delighted to have been the focus of our earlier art lesson!

Pupils and staff asked David questions too. These included: *"Are you writing any new books at the moment?"*; *"Do you have any advice for budding authors?"*; *"How long does it take you from start to finish to write a book?"* and *"Would you like to come into our school when it is safe to do so?"*.

David explained that he is writing a new book at the moment and commented, *"A budding author should keep their eyes and ears open at all times because you never know when a good idea might come along. It might be you are sat on the bus and you hear people talking, or you're watching something on the news on TV, or someone tells you a funny story – that might be the starting point to your story."*

Mr Walliams explained that his novels typically take three to four months to write.

David clarified where our school is located and agreed to come in one afternoon (when it is safe to do so) after he has had afternoon tea with Hugh!

An incredible World Book Day; one we shall never forget! A huge thanks to Hugh and David for their time, inspiring us all with their stories and experience; and for allowing us to share the images within this text, taken during the live sessions.

