

Reception Assembly

The school hall was decorated with a tent, camouflage and a ship's hull, complete with fish and an anchor, as parents took to their seats for Reception's first year group performance, previously having performed in the nativity play at Christmas.

Whilst they waited for the performers, the audience was heard discussing how much their children had been practising at home whilst the excitement grew for the performance by the reception class.

As the children entered the hall, it was clear to see how excited they were as they began to recognise their family members and a few waves took place between both the children and the audience.

Mrs Fearnley welcomed family and friends and recognised how hard the children had worked on both the topic and the performance, whilst reminding everyone that this was the first assembly this year group had produced. She commented on the décor and set the scene for an adventure into the world of James Cook.

As the children played the part of their teachers, they told us of the tent that had appeared in the school along with a note from John, the Great Great Grandson of the legendary James Cook. John was asking reception to look after his belongings with a promise that he would return to collect them. Intrigued by the note, the children set off on a journey of their own, to find out all about James Cook.

We heard some impressive examples of reading from the class as they revealed the contents of the letter and it was easy to forget these children were so young. We were told how local hero James Cook had been born to a farming family in Marton before moving to Whitby where he gained a love for the sea.

Having taken a job on the coal ships, Cook studied hard and progressed through the ranks in the Merchant Navy before volunteering for service in the Royal Navy. We were told how his map writing skills helped him become captain of his own ship and he set off on a voyage of discovery aboard The Endeavor. During his voyages, he discovered Australia, claiming it for Britain.

We learned how dangerous the trips were and how Cook almost became shipwrecked on the Great Barrier Reef. The children played their parts well as Captain Cook sailed on to New Zealand and Hawaii. Star performances shone through as the reception class reenacted the meeting of Captain Cook and a Hawaiian tribe. Dressed in grass skirts and flowers, we were told how Captain Cook was killed, completing his life story.

It was clear to see the children had embraced this topic and when after the assembly Mrs Fearnley asked who would like to be an explorer, 50% of the children raised their hands.

The excitement didn't end there as parents were invited along to join their children on a trip to the park.

Miss Milner said, *"The children have embraced this topic which involved a local hero. Their confidence has grown and it is impressive to see them perform so well in front of others."*

Miss Todd was equally proud, adding, *"We have seen some excellent examples of writing as children have produced their own postcards, inspired by those from John Cook."*

"They did really well. Nancy has been practicing at home and it was nice to see it all come together. We are looking forward to going to the park now, which is a nice treat after such a great performance." Nancy's Mum

“Elliott has really enjoyed this topic and we have been to the Captain Cook Museum at Stewart Park in Middlesbrough to learn more. It is nice that they are learning about local legends and that we can join in outside of school.” Elliott’s Mum

“I liked saying my words. I was a Commander.” Oliver

“I liked learning about James Cook and all of the ships.” Jack