

Wb 08.06.2020

Good morning Blackfen students,

It's Week B.

THE PIPS HAVE SOUNDED! GET UP! GET DRESSED! GET GOING!!

Last week, Mr Brown became a trend-setter! He didn't plan to start a trend: it just happened. In his weekly email to staff, Mr Brown described the unexpected journey of the tomato seeds to the canteen paving stones. Then he described his childhood holiday journeys to Cornwall: reminiscing about his Dad mapping the route; sitting in queues on motorways and being squashed in the car between suitcases and sisters. The trend took off! The teachers emailed back, describing their childhood holiday journeys; the kind of cars their parents were driving at the time; their holiday destinations and the traffic queues they experienced. Blackfen School travelled back in time ... and Mr Brown started the trend. You might like to try this one at home!

Trends are strange journeys because they start and stop, unexpectedly and don't go anywhere. We go on trend journeys because lots of people are on the same journey, already and we want to be squashed in, so that we can travel with them and go their way. I'm assuming that you have noticed puffy sleeves, jumpsuits, flares, baseball caps etc. During the trend journey, we worry about getting stuck in a queue because we want to keep up. We worry about knowing the trend, being on trend, staying on trend and changing to a better trend. Trend journeys require a lot of effort (and cost) and then they stop, in the middle of nowhere, leaving us to deal with excess baggage.

That is why Mr Brown's wiser words last week, by Ralph Waldo Emerson, were about trails and not trends: "*Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.*" In other words, take the lead in doing the right thing (for you), so that other people can follow the trail, do the right thing (for themselves) and reach a worthwhile destination. It's hard going first because there's no map to help you, everyone watches and no one helps.

During the May half-term holiday, I watched a student in school going first and leaving a trail. It was one of those very hot days and the classroom was stuffy, even with the windows open. The students came into the stuffy room and they became hot and stuffy, too. Oh dear, I thought. This isn't going to work out well. They listened to the teacher's guidance. Silence. No-one said anything. No-one did anything. It wasn't a case of being naughty: it was just too, too hot. Then one student got up, collected the resources and set out the materials on her table. She became absorbed in making her design and didn't really pay much attention to anyone else. She didn't notice the rest of the group following her example. Someone opened extra windows and someone else turned on a fan. Arrival at destination: the activity was a complete success.

The student who went first and led the way was far more influential than a trend-setter: she was a *trail-blazer*. Think about it.

Best wishes to you and your family this week.

Yours sincerely,

Miss F Minnis

Deputy Headteacher

On behalf of Blackfen School leaders and teachers

