

May 2020

Dear Year 6

I am a Science Teacher here at Ivybridge Community College, and my name is Mx Barry. You might not be used to seeing Mx like that but it's not a mistake; it's instead of other 'honorifics' like Mr or Mrs. You pronounce it "Mix". I prefer to use it because it is not gender-specific, and I want to support people who do not feel gender-specific themselves!

I am married and have three fantastic children, one of whom is the same age as you, and is also excited about starting secondary school. We live in the countryside near Kingsbridge and near the beach, and we love to be outdoors. I enjoy lots of things in life, reading, rugby, puzzles, food, walking, running, but most of all my family, and wild places; my favourites are where mountains meet the sea.

I hope you like my theme park, I really enjoyed making it – I loved the challenge of working to a budget, and thought I had succeeded in spending the money exactly – but when I checked, I had made one small mistake. I absolutely love theme parks, rollercoasters are literally the most fun thing ever, but also they have so much Science going on! I have always found them great examples to use when teaching about Force and Motion, Senses, Materials, and other topics. The Science department actually runs a College trip to Alton Towers – but not until Year 12, so you have a long wait! So it's not surprising that I chose Science as the theme to my theme park! You will find all the rides, and even the food outlets are linked to one of the experiments you can try at home.

The Science experiment that is most like me I think is the swinging coat hanger. This is because it needs time and care to set it up, it's no good rushing. It also needs careful practice to get the hang of it. I prefer the sense of achievement you get when you don't succeed quickly or first time, but have to go back over, refine things, adjust something and try again. When you eventually get this experiment to work, it's well worth it – everyone is amazed, and most people think it's a trick, or you have cheated with superglue or something, but no, it's just good Science!

Reading for me is one of the great joys in life, but I must be honest – I go through phases. Sometimes I get on a roll, and read loads of books in a short time, but at other times I read hardly anything. I recently read "Of mice and Men" by John Steinbeck as my son was doing it at school, and though I read it myself at his age, that was a long time ago! I very rarely read a book twice, but it's quite short and a great story. I like all kinds of different books, but mostly real-life adventure, especially mountain climbing, and science fiction. The books coming up next for me are: "The Universe Next Door" a collection of imaginative short Science stories, and "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" by Mark Twain, which is a time-travel tale.

I hope you enjoy Science, and I hope you enjoy the summer. We're all really looking forward to meeting you in September.

Stay safe and have fun.

Best wishes

Mx Barry