

## Michael Morpurgo's Visit

When I heard that Michael Morpurgo was coming to talk to us in Book Week I remembered all of his books that I had read and enjoyed, and often wondered about the author behind them all.



When he began to talk to us I was delighted to find that he had a fantastic personality, and as well as being a captivating author was a hilarious actor too! Michael Morpurgo proved to be a great live storyteller as well, as he described a childhood teacher, a 'stupid woman' in his own words, forcing her class to write 2 sides on a word she wrote on the blackboard. In his story the word was 'giraffe' something which he hadn't a clue about! He then went on to tell us how Belinda, 'the love of his life', would be enthusiastically scribbling next to him, but being an 'annoying person' would never let him see what she was writing! He would only do the writing to avoid being kept in for detention! He also gave us a wonderful imitation of a giraffe drinking – swaying this way and that, while trying to spread his feet apart and get his head down to the water level. It really sent me into peals of laughter as he looked so comical! I was really

surprised by his story as I expected that being such a great author he would have always loved to write. His story encouraged many as it showed how one can initially hate doing something but develop a love for it later on and even be quite successful at it.

Michael Morpurgo also read out an extract from one of his books about his 'one and only great escape' keeping us hanging on his every word! Drawn from his experience as a child at boarding school his writing was amusing yet also made you empathise with the character.

At the end of Michael Morpurgo's talk with us we were invited to ask questions. One that stuck in my mind was his answer to the question, 'Why did you become an author if you hated writing as a child?' He told us that it was during his time as a teacher that he discovered what he really wanted to do. Michael Morpurgo explained how one day the school's 'nutty' headmistress had a fantastic idea of reading to the pupils during the last half an hour of school.



He then showed us what his year 6 class looked like when he first tried reading to them. He sent me into fits of giggles as his face was the spitting image of a bored child!! He told us how he had to do something to excite and interest the children, so the next day at story time he told

them something he had invented himself. In his own words, “I could see there was magic in it for them, and realised there was magic in it for me.”



I really enjoyed Michael Morpurgo’s visit. In his own words, ‘Today I am here, but tomorrow I will just be part of your memory.’ But what a memory! One I will happily recall time and time again with a smile on my face.

Anneena Kelay, Year 9