Homework Tasks (Year 5):

- **Comprehension:** Please complete – and mark – 'The Magic of Merlin' on pg.2 and 3 of this file. Answers can be found on pg.4. Your responses should be recorded in your Homework Jotter provided by school.
- **Maths:** Please complete – and mark – 'Percentages as Fractions and Decimals' on pg.5 of this file. Answers can be found on pg.6. Please use these to help work out how to answer any questions you are unsure about. Your responses should be recorded in your Homework Book provided by school.

Please ensure your completed homework books are handed in at school on Wednesday 12th March

- **Spelling:** A spelling test on **Spring 2 Week 2** list of words will take place next **Friday**. The list of words is available separately on the Woodpecker Class page of the school website. Please log onto Spelling Shed to support practice at home.
- **Multiplication and Division Facts:** A test of a variety of multiplication facts will take place every **Thursday**. Please practise all facts up to 12 x 12.
- **Reading:** You are expected to do **at least 20 minutes** of independent reading at home, **every day**. *Please remember to log all new books read – both those at home and at school – in our class reading log as there are no home reading records in Woodpecker Class*:

The Magic Of Merlin

Name: Merlinus Ambrosius

Dates: Lived in the 6th Century AD for approximately 450 years

Place of Birth: Wales

Family: Mother – Adhan; father - an unnamed magical figure who gave Merlin his supernatural powers. Sister – Ganielda (later Queen of the Cumbrians)

Spouse: Gwendolen

Occupation: Sage, druid, prophet, magician.

The Legend

Many stories exist surrounding the existence and life of the magician known as Merlin. Some say he was a real-life historical figure, others that he was an invention of writers telling fabricated tales of the history of Britain. As his life span occurred in an age where there is limited historical data, it is difficult to have definitive proof either way. What we do know is that his name is synonymous with the idea of powerful magic and the legend of King Arthur.

Origins and early life

Born to a mortal woman and a supernatural figure, early stories of Merlin say he had magical gifts. His powers were said to be deeply connected to nature and the elements, especially the forests. Some think stories of Myrddin, a sage (wise healer and elder) from Welsh folklore are early stories of Merlin. Known as "the Wildman of the woods", Myrddin had been an adviser in the Welsh court. Traumatised by scenes in battle where the Welsh chieftain and his own sister were slain, Myrddin fled to the forest where he acquired the gift of prophecy. The name Merlin later returns in stories as an advisor to Kings of the Britons: Vortigern, Uther Pendragon and his son King Arthur.

The Gift of Prophecy

To make a prophecy is to see omens or symbols that allow one to predict the future. These may be from dreams, "visions", animals or even in clouds or landscapes. Merlin was said to have made many prophecies, many of which are found in Geoffrey of Monmouth's historical writings of around 1130 AD (rather than the 500s when Merlin supposedly lived). The prophecies, as detailed by Monmouth, were vague enough to be interpreted in many different ways. To the superstitious folk of the 12th century, it was popular to think they came from a wise wizard.

The Two Dragons Prophecy

Vortigern, a ruler of Briton, was said to have called upon Merlin to interpret a problem he was having

building a tower on a certain piece of land. Merlin is said to have told him that he could not build there as the land was on a pool inhabited by two dragons who were fighting. The red dragon (interpreted to be the Saxon's who had invaded Briton at the time) seemed to have the upper hand, however, the white dragon (the Briton's under Vortigern's rule) would win in the end. When this happened, the tower could be built. Vortigern saw this as a vision of the future, and he went on to win the battle for Briton.

Other predictions that Merlin made included that Arthur, son of Uther, would become King after removing a sword from a stone. He, as the "true heir of Briton", would have a round table of knights, where all the court were equal and rules of chivalry would preside. This would, Merlin predicted, unite the country in an age of peace and prosperity. According to Arthurian legend, all this came true.

Merlin's Demise

Stories tell of several apprentices who came to learn from the great wizard and who were blessed by being able to share his magical gifts (although not his gift of prophecy). Fairy Queen Sebile and Arthur's half-sister Morgan la Fey learnt magic from Merlin, though Morgan betrayed him. Merlin's most famous apprentice was Nimueh, the lady of the Lake at Avalon, who became so powerful she bewitched and trapped Merlin underground for eternity. It is unclear where the "cave" or stone which marks Merlin's final resting place is.

Was Merlin real or is he just a made-up figure? Writers, historians, and archaeologists cannot seem to agree. What is clear is that this fascinating figure has inspired many young would-be mages to dream of a magical existence.

RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. Who were Merlin's parents, what was special about them?

2. Who might have been an early "version" of Merlin?

3. Who did Merlin advise?

4. Name two of Merlin's apprentices.

5. What happened to Merlin in the end?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

V Merlin is described as a, "Sage, druid, prophet, magician" – what do these words mean?

E How does the author cast doubt on whether Merlin was actually real?

I The prophecies of Merlin were only "published" over 600 years after his death. How does this make them seem less reliable?

I Why do you think Merlin's prophecies were popular?

E Does it matter whether Merlin was real or not?

Answers - Stage 5 - The Magic Of Merlin:

1. Mother – Adhan; father - an unnamed magical figure who gave Merlin his supernatural powers.

2. Welsh folklore hero Myrddin

3. Merlin advised the kings of Briton: Vortigern, Uther Pendragon and his son Arthur.

4. Fairy Queen Sebile, Morgan La Fey and Nimeuh (lady of the Lake of Avalon).

5. He was betrayed by his apprentice Nimeuh who cast a spell on him and trapped him underground for all time.

V:

- Sage – wise man

- druid – important religious leader and healer in ancient Celtic times

- prophet – someone who has or interprets visions and symbols to predict the future

- Magician – person who has magical powers (aka a mage)

E: Throughout the piece there are phrases which suggest it is debatable that Merlin existed, he is introduced to us in "stories" and that it is "difficult to have definitive proof" of whether he is real. The facts we are told are only "according to people" or from what "some people say" which casts doubt on their truth. In the first and final paragraphs the writer acknowledges that he may not be real.
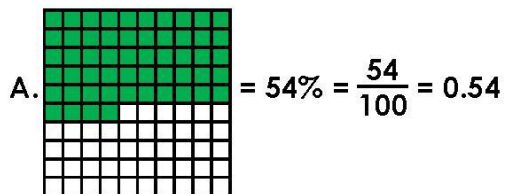
I: There are few written records from the time Merlin was alive and those about him that exist come over 500 years later, so are likely to be inaccurate. They are being written by and interpreted by people from a different historical age and are not recorded elsewhere, so how do these people know the prophecies or any of the stories are true?

I: The prophecies were popular because they were written when people were more superstitious and more inclined to believe in such things. Also, because they are vague, people can interpret them in different ways to suit what they want them to say. Some people like to feel the universe is controlling their destiny and the prophecies suggest this.
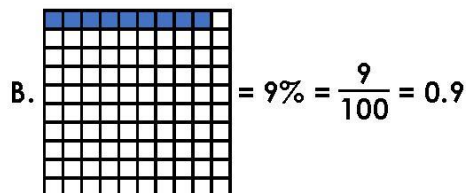
E: It does not really matter if he was real or not; people are still fascinated by Merlin's story. The author says writers, historians and archaeologists still debate his existence, which implies he is a topic of interest and conversation.

Percentages as Fractions and Decimals

4. Circle the statements which are incorrect.

A. = 54% = $\frac{54}{100}$ = 0.54

C. $\frac{42}{200}$ = $\frac{21}{100}$ = 21% = 2.1

B. = 9% = $\frac{9}{100}$ = 0.9

D. $\frac{128}{200}$ = $\frac{64}{100}$ = 64% = 0.64

5. Find and colour the equivalent fractions, decimal and percentage in each grid.

A.

0.6	0.006	6%
0.06	$\frac{6}{100}$	6
66%	6.6	$\frac{16}{100}$

B.

21%	6.3	$\frac{21}{100}$
63%	$\frac{126}{300}$	0.21
0.63	2.1	$\frac{63}{300}$

6. Euan and Kayley are completing a sponsored swim. They need to swim 300 lengths of the pool.

Kayley: I have completed 71% of my sponsored swim.

Euan: I have completed $\frac{47}{50}$ lengths so far.

Kayley

Euan

Who has completed the most lengths? How do you know?

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Expected

4. B (9% = 0.09) and C (21% = 0.21)

5. A. $\frac{6}{100}$, 6% and 0.06; B. $\frac{63}{300}$, $\frac{21}{100}$, 21% and 0.21

6. Kayley has completed $\frac{71}{100}$ or $\frac{213}{300}$, which is 71%. Euan has completed $\frac{94}{100}$ or $\frac{282}{300}$, which is 94%, so Euan has completed the most lengths.

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