

The Maths Challenge

On the afternoon of 13th Mar, I left school giddy with excitement and nervousness about the Maths Challenge. I stepped into the minibus, eager to get started. However, anxiety started spreading through my veins. During the journey, I and Anaiya had a very jokey conversation, which swept the nervousness away.

When we made it to Orley Farm School, where the competition was organized, we sat in our seats for about 40 minutes, carrying on with the jokey conversation to keep the nerves at bay. After most of the schools arrived, Mr. Buchanan introduced himself as the coordinator of the challenge, and started explaining the rules. We had to complete one question, then run to the front of the room to get it marked before attempting to solve the next question. Anaiya told me why this was unfair – we were sat at the back row and would have to run the furthest. The people closest to the marking row had to run the least. But Mr. Buchanan had already thought of that dilemma and had a plan to fix it. He explained that we had to run to the back row and then back to our seats. This was a very welcome rule for us!

Round 1 was “Find the Number”. We were given 5 numbers that corresponded to the letters A, B, C, D and E but we did not know which was which. We were also given some equations using the letters and we had to work out the values of A, B, C, D and E. There ~~was~~^{were} also bonus points to be awarded for the first five teams to finish their 10 questions correctly. Anaiya and I sped like lightning through the questions and easily annihilated our competitors by two whole minutes. We earned TEN bonus points! We watched our friends from Reddiford going slowly and we silently urged Akshayen to run!

Round 2 was “Counting Down”. We both concurred that this was the most difficult round, but we found a question that was a duplicate which was rather funny. This round had 20 questions instead of 10 and no bonus points sadly. The format of this round was similar to the numbers round on the “Countdown” show where you are given 6 numbers and you have to use them to make a target number. We struggled quite a bit in this, as a result, we only solved 12 in the allocated time. Mr. Buchanan was correct in saying, “you won’t finish it in that time!”

Round 3 was the “Big Event”. It had 20 questions designed to test our lateral thinking. We ploughed through them. Question 16 was really hard, however we managed to finish the other 19. We did a last attempt for full marks, at the final moment, Anaiya asked me to run and get an answer for Q16 checked. Sadly, it was wrong.

We were anxious to find out the results, but also excited by the possibility of getting first place. Indeed, Anaiya even said, “We will get 1st.” She called it! We got 1st and I really wish you could have seen the elated expressions on our faces. We were so happy and relieved! Our prizes were an exciting Maths book each!

After the competition, we got drinks and snacks and then we went on the minibus back to school. On the minibus, I mainly just read my book but Anaiya came up with a funny (if not rather silly) plan. She said we could trick everyone in our class into thinking we got 4th place and then tell them what we really got later and have a laugh. I agreed almost instantly.

P.S: The funniest moments in the day.

- When I dropped our answers while running back to our desk in “The Big Event”
- When we made a rap about another group (who missed the event)

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