

if aliens landed in the
classroom ...



This morning Mr McCluskey said to the class: 'When aliens from outer space finally land on this planet, what language do you think they'll speak?'

For a few moments there was total silence, and we were all thinking: has Mr McCluskey gone off of his head? And I thought, maybe he has and they'll send us home.

Then Orla Daly stands up and says, 'Please, sir, they'll be speaking English.'

'Don't be stupid, girl,' says Mr McCluskey. 'They'll no more be speaking English than they'll be speaking Irish. But I'll tell the lot of you what they *will* be speaking. They'll all be speaking *Maths*, that's what they'll be speaking. And, Johnny Coughlan,' says Mr McCluskey, 'can you enlighten the class as to why aliens from outer space will be speaking Maths? And will you take your pencil out of your ear, boy, before



you puncture the few brains that you have left.'

'No, sir, I don't know why they'll be speaking Maths.'

'Of course you don't know,' says Mr McCluskey, 'well, sit down and I'll tell you. They'll be speaking Maths because maths *is the language of the universe*. And do any of you know why maths is the language of the universe? I'll tell you why,' says Mr McCluskey. 'Maths is the language of the universe because words are different for different people, but *numbers will always stay the same*. And let me tell you something else: if aliens from outer space were to land in this classroom at this very moment, not one of you would be able to understand them, because you are all sideways and backwards and upside-down when it comes to maths.'

Then Mr McCluskey turns around and draws something on the board, and he says: 'Mickey Murphy, please enlighten the class as to what this is.'

So Monkey Murphy stands up and he looks at the board and he says, 'It's a flying saucer, sir!'

'No, boy, it is *not* a flying saucer,' says Mr McCluskey, 'it is an *isosceles triangle*.'

And that is what we learnt at school today: how to talk to aliens.