



# English & Mathematics at Thorndown Primary School

## English

### World Book Day

On Friday 4 March, the school celebrated World Book Day. The children brought clues to school related to a favourite book. We had lots of fun trying to guess which story they were from. The children enjoyed meeting an author, James Campbell, who was extremely entertaining and inspiring and many pupils and their families visited our book fair. We must apologise for any confusion had with the mix up between Usborne and Scholastic. Please be rest assured that the Scholastic book fair has been booked for next year as this was very missed by parents and children. A big thank you to all of the parents and carers that supported this special day.



### Storytelling Sacks

At Thorndown we would like to introduce story sacks to our younger children in Early Years and Key Stage One. A story sack is usually a drawstring bag that contains a range of items to support a particular book. It includes at least one copy of the book, some small soft toys or plastic characters from the story and a non-fiction book related to the theme. These are extremely expensive to purchase, so we have decided to make them! We are looking for volunteers who are able to give up a few hours of their time to help us make some story sacks for the classrooms. This will involve making, laminating and strimming, and you will receive comprehensive training if needed! If you would like to help out on Tuesday 19th April or Tuesday 26th April, please contact Mrs Browne at [nbrowne@thorndown.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:nbrowne@thorndown.cambs.sch.uk). Any help will be very gratefully received and tea, coffee and biscuits will, of course, be provided!

## Mathematics

### Mastery in Maths

It is a very exciting time for maths at Thorndown! Mrs Gerrard has been selected as one of only four teachers in Cambridgeshire to take part in a government funded training programme run by the National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics (NCETM). This training is focusing on a new approach to the teaching of maths, known as 'Mastery'. Through this approach, it is aimed that all children will become fluent mathematicians, who are able to reason and solve problems. Mrs Gerrard has been trialling the new style of lessons with Year 6 children. When asked, the children reported that they really enjoyed their lessons and felt that they were now much better at reasoning. They also felt that they challenged themselves more and were able to complete harder tasks. The class was visited by a total of ten teachers from five local schools to see a 'mastery lesson' in action. They were very impressed by the learning and behaviour of Lemur Class and were keen to try out some of the things they saw in their own schools. Mrs Gerrard will be talking about this project at the next Parent Forum meeting and we will be rolling this approach out to Year 5 in the new term.

### Number Sense Project in Key Stage 1

Year 1 and 2 have been participating in an exciting research project, led by a maths adviser from Hertfordshire. Through this project, we have been working to develop the children's ability to understand and reason about numbers, which we call 'number sense'. Research has found that children's early experience of numbers through the playing of board games, which use dice, plays a very important role in developing number sense. Researchers have also found that children with strong number sense tend to be much more confident with numbers and are able to calculate more efficiently. To help develop our pupils' number sense, we have introduced a range of activities and games in class. If you would like to know more about this project and ways you can support at home, please come to our workshop, which will take place on Tuesday 3rd May at 9am. More details will be sent out in the new term.

## Spring Term

Issue 11

23.03.16

### Oxford Owl

As a school, we have recently signed up for e-books through the Oxford Owl website. Oxford Owl is an award-winning website to help support children's learning, both at home and at school. It is packed with expert advice, top tips and activity ideas so you can help your child with reading and maths. Please [click here](#) to access it and browse the fantastic resource.

### **Maths Support For Parents**

You may remember reading about Jo Boaler in previous letters. Jo is a British maths professor who is currently working at Stamford University in San Francisco. She has written several books about maths and has a great website which many teachers use to help develop their practice.

Jo has just produced a handout for parents which includes some advice for helping children and some links to areas of her site which you might find useful. Please [click here](#) to access the handout, or visit [www.youcubed.org](http://www.youcubed.org)