



Literacy & Mathematics at Thorndown Primary School

Literacy

Big Write

This term, we have introduced something new to help develop writing at Thorndown. 'Big Write' is a philosophy which was originally devised by Ros Wilson, a former teacher and Ofsted Inspector. It is based on the premise that to write well, children need to feel confident and motivated. It encourages children to talk about their writing and understand what they need to do to make it better. The V.C.O.P Superheroes are a key element of this and we have a dedicated 'Big Write' session once week. The children are encouraged to write at length, which builds their writing stamina, and to use all the skills they have learnt during the past week. In every classroom the learning atmosphere is very important. The lighting is sometimes changed and battery powered candles are switched on. Special pencils are used in KS1, handwriting pens are used in KS2 and music is played softly in the background. The children thoroughly enjoyed the first week and we are looking forward to watching the children become confident little writers!

Home School Diaries

The Home School Diaries are a great way to communicate with your child's class teacher. The 'Daily Comments' page can be used by both teacher and parents for short messages, for example, if your child is being collected by somebody different or to arrange a meeting with your child's class teacher. In Reception and KS1, children's diaries will be checked daily by the teacher or teaching assistant. In KS2, it is the responsibility of the children to show their diary to their teacher if there is a message from home. Please also check diaries regularly to see if there are any messages from school.

Mathematics

Marvellous Maths Day

In school, through the use of a range of activities and approaches, including 'Maths Eyes', we have been encouraging the development of the children's reasoning and problem solving skills. We try to make maths fun and relevant and, with this aim, we will be holding a marvellous day of maths on Wednesday, 21st January. We will kick off the day with a whole school assembly, which will include a couple of musical 'numbers!' The children will then engage in some investigations and puzzles through which they will practise applying problem solving skills such as working logically, recording systematically and using trial and improvement methods to find solutions. We will let you know what we get up to in the next school newsletter.

Support for Parents

Want to find out more about maths and ways you can help at home? Our maths advisers have recommended this website: nationalnumeracy.org.uk

From here, you can follow a link to a **parents' toolkit**, which has these tips:

- **Be positive about maths! Never say things like 'I can't do maths' or 'I hated maths at school'... your child might start to think like that themselves...**
- **Point out the maths in everyday life.** Include your child in activities involving maths such as using money, cooking and travelling.
- **Praise your child for effort rather than talent** - this shows them that by working hard they can always improve.

There is other information about maths and also some age-appropriate ideas for activities that you can do with your child at home.

Parent Workshops

We are currently organising our planned calculation workshops for parents, about which a letter was sent out last term. If you did not send a reply slip back, and would like to attend, please complete the attached form and return it by Friday, 23rd January.

Spring Term 1
2015

Issue 5

Wanted!

We would really appreciate your help please! We are in need of plastic tubs with lids to store maths resources in, such as dice and small objects for counting. If you buy food (eg pasta sauces or fresh soup) or washing tablets which come in plastic tubs with lids, please wash and send them in to school for Mrs Gerrard. The net bags which are sometimes supplied with washing tablets are also very useful, if you have any spare! Many thanks.

Literacy Apps

Here are a few apps which you may find helpful. You should be able to locate these through the Apple App Store or through Google Play for Android users. (Please note, there is a small cost for some of these apps.)

'Doodle Buddy'

abc Pocket Phonics

'Read with Biff, Chip and Kipper: Library'

'BBC CBeebies Storytime'

'Book Creator'

If you have any favourite apps, we'd love to hear about them.