

## Tips for Supporting Maths.

- Comparing heights - what is taller/shorter than you?
- Discussing weight - which is heavier/lighter?
- Sharing objects between brothers and sisters/members of the family.
- What day is it today/tomorrow?
- Recognising numbers around the house e.g. on the clock - if you cover a number, which one is missing?
- Can you cut your toast in half? Into 4 pieces?
- Counting plates, knives, forks, cups when laying the table.
- Measuring ingredients - discussing full, half full, empty.
- Playing board games, taking turns, counting moves on a board, counting spots on a dice.
- Writing shopping lists - 5 carrots, 2 loaves of bread etc.
- Writing numbers - chalk on the patio, paint with water on the wall/fence, writing numbers on iPad Apps, writing numbers in the air with ribbons/glow sticks (sometimes found in pound shops)!
- Adding - count numbers on fingers or start on the first number and 'count on' with fingers. E.g.  $5 + 3$  would be 5...6, 7, 8.
- Taking away by holding up the first number on fingers, then putting some fingers down.
- Discussing shapes around the house - both flat (2D - square, rectangle, circle, diamond, oval, pentagon, hexagon) and solid (3D - cube, cuboid, sphere, cylinder, pyramid).

## Supporting Learning at Home in the Early Years.

Many parents have asked for ideas regarding how they can support learning in reading, writing and maths at home. Here is some information about how we teach these subjects in school, and some ideas regarding how you can support your children in these areas at home. If you have any questions, please ask!

### Tips for Reading.

**Key Words that we use in school:**

**Phoneme** - a single unit of sound in a word. E.g. s, n, f.

**Digraph** - when two letters work together to make a sound in a word. E.g. sh, oi, er.

**Trigraph** - when three letters work together to make a sound. E.g. igh.

**Segment** - to break a word down into the phonemes/sounds.

**Blend** - to blend these phonemes/sounds into the word.

**Tricky words** - words that the children cannot segment and blend. These words just have to be learned e.g. said, the, no, go.

- Encourage them to try and read the title first. Discuss - what do you think might happen in this book?
- Encourage them to follow the words with their finger, although some children can confidently track text with their eyes and this is fine.
- Try not to rush the children - they may spend a minute looking at the pictures in detail and commenting on what they can see before they attempt to read, and this is to be encouraged.

- They may begin by guessing the words or making up their own story using the pictures. Encourage them to use the phonemes to 'segment and blend' any words they don't know.
- Encourage and support the children to use 'pure sounds' when sounding out words. The children can sometimes add an 'uh' noise on the end of the phonemes.
- In a word such as 'ship', the children may sound this out as s-h-i-p. If this is the case, ask "can you spot a digraph in that word?" and encourage them to try again - sh-i-p.
- Don't let a child struggle on a word for too long - help them with the word to keep the flow of their reading.
- Encourage them to re-read the sentence as a whole, if they took a while to read it.
- If they are stuck, ask "could the pictures help you?"
- Help children on the 'tricky' words that cannot be sounded out and just have to be learned e.g. the, was, wanted, go, said.
- Give lots of praise and encouragement!
- Discuss the book as they read - "How does that character feel?" "Why do you think they did that?"

### Tips for Writing.

- When writing, the children will learn a lot more from 'having a go' themselves than from copying or being told exactly which letters to write (with 'tricky words' being the exception). This is because it is really important that children use their knowledge of phonics in their writing.
- Plan the sentence with your child - ask them to tell you what they want to write. E.g. "I went swimming." Count the words together on your fingers.
- Rehearse the sentence again and ask - "What was the first word in your sentence?"
- Encourage them to say the word to themselves - again and again if necessary - and listen for the phonemes that they can hear. Encourage them to write these sounds down in the correct order.
- Rehearse the sentence with them again if necessary, following the words they have written already on the paper with your/their finger. Encourage them to work out which word comes next.
- Begin to encourage them to read their writing back to themselves to check that they haven't missed out any words and that their writing makes sense.
- Encourage them to use "finger spaces" between their words.
- When they have finished, ask "What do you need when you have finished your sentence?" Encourage them to use a full stop.