

# Foundation

Thank you for attending the recent parent/teacher meetings. We hope that you found the opportunity to speak with us useful. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further questions, concerns or feedback!

The children have enjoyed learning about Chinese New Year. Our New Year celebrations began with exploring the story of why the years are named in the order they are! The children in school also enjoyed trying to pick up woollen noodles with chopsticks, writing Chinese characters and making animals with tangrams. We located China on a world map and performed a simple dragon dance! This week in Maths the children have been learning about positional language such as the words up, down, over, under, into, out of, beside, next to, away from, across, between, behind, in front of, at the back, through, top, bottom, inside, outside and upside down. We also read several stories thinking about how to stay safe on the internet. Today we loved seeing the children dressed up – what a variety of favourite stories there are!

We have finished Phonics Booklet 2. The booklet can now be kept at home. Please keep practising the sounds, especially the digraphs and trigraphs, as experience tells us children find these hard to recognise and to remember how to write. Repetition and praise really help! We will spend the remainder of the year consolidating what we have learnt.

During the Foundation Year, we try to instil a growth mindset in all our children. Mindset is defined as a set of beliefs that determine somebody's behaviour and outlook in life, and can be split into two types – a fixed mindset and a growth mindset. Those with a fixed mindset believe natural talent alone creates success and one doesn't need to put much effort into achieving things they are naturally good at. They tend to give up easily with tasks, as they get upset by mistakes, and are afraid of challenges and failure. Those with a growth mindset believe intelligence and ability can be developed over time through effort, dedication and hard work. They believe they can be successful if they apply effort and hard work, and are more likely to continue working hard despite setbacks.

<b>Fixed mindset</b>	<b>Growth Mindset</b>
I am not good at this ...	What am I missing?
I give up.	I'll use a different strategy.
It's good enough.	Is this really my best work?
I can't do this any better.	I can always improve.
This is too hard.	I need some more practise.
I made a mistake.	Mistakes help me learn.
I can't do this.	I will train my brain.
I will never be that clever.	I will learn how to do this
My friend can do this.	I will learn from them.

Hearing a consistent message is important and we would like to encourage you to try some of the following ideas at home:

- Praise the amount of effort your child is putting into things, rather than how clever they are.
- Discuss errors and mistakes and help your child to see them as opportunities to learn and improve.
- Talk to your child about their brain being like a muscle – the more they use it, the stronger it gets.
- Encourage your child to persevere if they are finding something difficult.
- Challenge your child to try something new or challenging.

What about trying these fun challenges during half-term to help your brain grow and become even stronger:

1. Swap hands and try and write some phonemes!
2. Change your morning routine. Get dressed after breakfast, walk the dog on a new route, or change your normal TV channel or radio station.
3. Try some Brain Yoga. Take your left hand, make a fist, and extend your thumb; holding this, do the same with your right, only extend your little pinky. Now change them so it's left pinky and right thumb.
4. Play '10 Things'. Take an ordinary object and try to think of 10 different 'things' that the object might be. For example, a wooden spoon might become a tennis racket, a golf club, a fan, a baton, a drumstick, a violin, a shovel, a microphone, a baseball bat, or even a canoe paddle!
5. Play some memory games such as 'My Grandmother went to market' or 'Kim's Game'.

After half term, we will continue with our topic of 'Ideas to Save the World' by looking at inspirational people such as Greta Thunberg and Malala Yousafzai.

In case you are looking for something to do at half-term, here is a link to Twilight at the Museums – an annual FREE after-hours event for families, where museums and collections across Cambridge offer a variety of torch-lit and illuminated activities. This year it will be online with ideas from the 15<sup>th</sup> here:

[https://www.museums.cam.ac.uk/events/twilight\\_museums](https://www.museums.cam.ac.uk/events/twilight_museums) .

A group that we have had in school running workshops are also running February half-term drama workshops online for Reception to Year 6 aged children. You can read all about the classes here: <https://www.perform.org.uk/classes-courses/holiday-courses/fe2021>.

The Globe are offering online storytellings and workshops to immerse young children in the world of Shakespeare's plays: <https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/seasons/telling-tales-2021>.

We hope you have a relaxing break and enjoy some delicious pancakes on Tuesday,

The Foundation Team