



Acorns Newsletter



December 8th, 2024

Christmas Lunch and Jumper Day

Tomorrow the children will enjoy a delicious Christmas lunch in school thanks to our amazing catering team. You will be able to order this lunch in the usual way.

Don't forget, your child can come into school tomorrow wearing a Christmas jumper.

Party Morning and Crafts Afternoon

This Tuesday, during the morning, the children will enjoy their Christmas party with festive fun and games. In the afternoon we are holding our annual Acorns Christmas Crafts event from 1:45 to 3pm. We would like to invite you to come and join your child in our Acorns building for an afternoon of Christmassy craft making. There will be a variety of activities available in the classrooms for you to choose from with your child and they will be able to take their creations home with them afterwards.

Please can we ask that only **one adult** per child attends as space in our building is limited. The lower gate will be opened just prior to the event to welcome you in.

It's showtime!

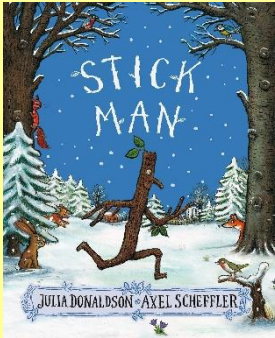
Last Friday you will hopefully all have received our Christmas flyer outlining the exciting events planned for our Reception children over the next fortnight.

We have begun rehearsing for our Christmas show (to be held in the school hall on Thursday 19th December from 1:30pm) and the children are already super excited for their big day.

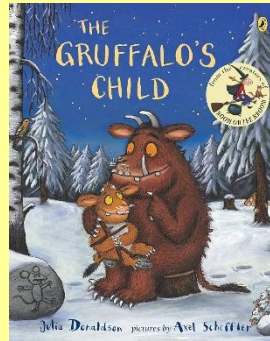
We look forward to seeing you at our Christmas Show in the school hall. Please come and enjoy a mince pie and a festive drink from 1:30pm before the show begins at 2pm. Due to fire regulations, we ask that no more than **2 adults** per family attend please.

Books we have shared in school

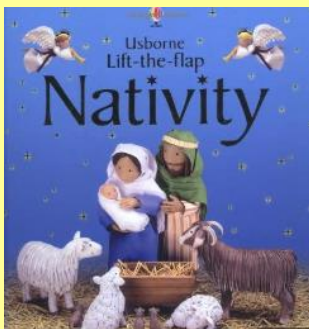
Each week during Huddle Storytime, we share a collection of quality books with the children. They may be stories or information books. We link our books to different areas of learning to help the children to deepen their understanding and to broaden their vocabulary. We also choose stories with no obvious link, just for pleasure. Below are the books we have shared over the last two weeks:



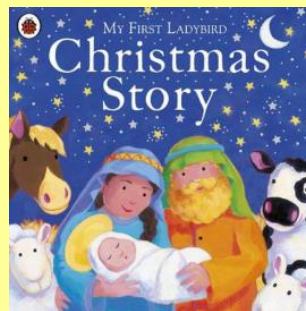
'Stick Man'
by Julia Donaldson



'The Gruffalo's Child'
by Julia Donaldson



Usborne
Lift-the-flap
'Nativity'



My first Ladybird
'Christmas Story'



'The Christmas Book'
By Dick Bruna

Reading Books

As your child grows in confidence in reading simple three letter cvc words (consonant-vowel-consonant words), we will send home a reading book for them to practise this skill with you at home. Reading books will be changed on a Monday and Tuesday in school. Your child will receive a reading diary where we will record their reading target for the week. There is also a space for you to make comment on their reading progress at home – this is always really helpful for us to ensure we are pitching their home learning appropriately. Please ensure their book and diary are kept inside the zippy wallet provided to ensure it is safe and kept in good condition.

If your child has not yet received a reading book, they are still learning to read or 'blend' together the sounds in these simple words. We call this learning to 'Fred Talk' in school. Please watch the video below which will show you how to practise this skill at home:

<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/EqR6QjVS/Ctm6PxK9>

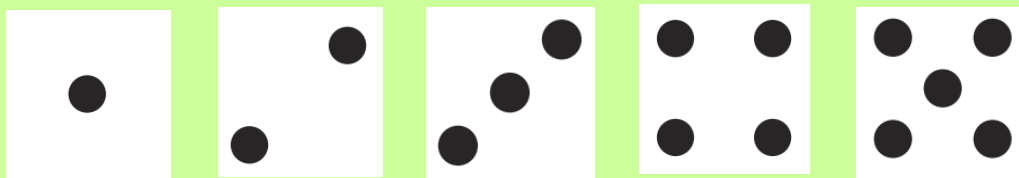


Number Time: Subitising

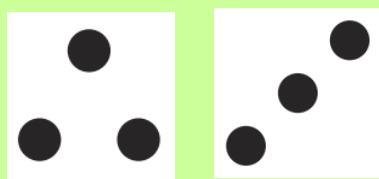
In Reception, we develop children's number sense by teaching them to be aware of, and to use, the skill of 'subitising' – that is, to recognise a number of things without counting them.

Subitising is a skill that develops from a very young age – a baby can see the difference between one and two and can also the difference between two sets of dots where one is double the quantity of the other. Many young children learn in a visual way and some find it easier to remember images rather than words e.g. a 3 year old could recognise 3 things but maybe not remember the word 'three'.

Over the last two weeks, your child has been learning the skill of 'perceptual subitising' which is being able to recognise small quantities without counting (1-5). This helps to understand the 'cardinal value' or 'howmanyness' of a number. We began with a structured, familiar pattern of dots as on a dice before moving on to less familiar patterns:



When we practise our subitising skills, we often look at, and compare two representations together and ask the children to explain what they can see to encourage them to use a range of mathematical language:

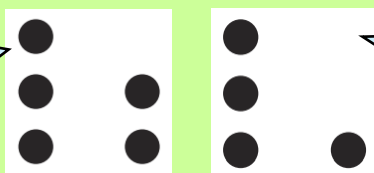


I know it is 3.
It is a triangle shape.

It is still 3 but now it is a diagonal 3.

When looking at arrangements of dots in this way they are learning to say how many they see by looking for numbers within numbers and adding the two subgroups together. This is known as 'conceptual subitising'.

I can see 3 and 2 and I know that makes 5.



It must be 4 because there is one less.

Some ideas for subitising at home

Say what you see: Looking at arrangements of things in pictures, at home or when out and about, encourage your child to subitise to tell you how many they see. When they tell you, ask them to explain by saying “how did you know?”



Say what you see: Ask your child to look at the dot patterns and match them together. Ask them to tell you how many they see without counting. You might ask them to describe the arrangement they see e.g. it is four because I can see 2 and 2 or I can see double 3 so it is 6.

Listen, how many? Ask your child to close their eyes and listen as you drop a number of pennies into a pot. Afterwards, ask them to say what they heard. You might make sound/number patterns e.g. dropping two, leaving a pause then dropping one more.



Pairs Using cards with arrangements of up to 5 dots on, lay the cards on the table and take turns to turn a pair over to see if they match... say what you see!



More or less? Using the same dotty cards as above, two players turn over a card at the same time. Who has more and who has less? Say what you see! The player with more dots on their card wins the pair.

Developing Handwriting

In Reception, we provide a variety of multisensory ways in which your child can practise letter formation. We also provide regular opportunities for them to write their letters on a whiteboard and with a pencil on paper. Here are a few ideas for you to try at home:



When your child practises forming each letter, remind them of the letter picture and formation phrase for each letter. **Please refer to the handwriting phrases sheet we have attached with this newsletter.**

As they form the letter shape, encourage them to say the phrase aloud as they do so. They could have a try at the letter shape first in the air with their magic pointy finger.

Read Write Inc. Phonics Handwriting phrases		OXFORD	Ruth Miskin Training
Use these handwriting phrases to help your child to remember how to form each letter correctly.			
Always practise writing sitting at a table and write on paper using a sharp pencil.			
1. Write the letter in the air as you say the phrase. Ask your child to practise in the air with you.			
2. Help your child to say the phrase as they write the letter on paper.			
m Maise, mountain, mountain		b down the laces to the heel, round the toe	
a round the apple, down the leaf		f down the stem and draw the leaves	
s sitther down the snake		e lift off the top and scoop out the egg	
d round the dinosaur's bottom, up its tall neck and down to the feet.		l down the long leg	
t down the tower, across the tower		h down the head to the hooves and over its back	
i down the body, dot for the head		r down its back and then curl over its arm	
n down Nobby, over his net		j down its body, curl and dot	
p down the plait and over the pirate's face		v down a wing, up a wing	
g round her face, down her hair and give her a curl		y down a horn, up a horn and under its head	
o all around the orange		w down, up, down, up	
c curl around the caterpillar		z zig-zag-zig	
k down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg		q round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair	
u down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle		x down the arm and leg and repeat the other side	

You may find the video link below a helpful guide in supporting your child with letter formation. In the video it refers to using a wipe-clean resource. You can however support your child in the same way using any of the multi-sensory ideas above.

<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/training/view/rjJRSBjP/CBpfDwt2>



Below are some home learning links for you to use over the next fortnight with your child at home. These videos are only a few minutes long but will really boost your child's phonics skills. They will also give you an insight into how phonics is taught in school. The links will remain active until March so please revisit any letters sent previously to help your child retain their new learning.

We have been learning the following letters in school, please click on the links to practise these letters at home:

[letter l](#)

[letter h](#)

[letter r](#)

[letter j](#)

[letter v](#)

[letter w](#)

[letter y](#)

[letter z](#)

[letter x](#)

Blending step 1: Your child may still be learning to hear and blend the sounds in a word. These Fred Talk Games below will help your child to develop this important pre-reading skill:

[Fred at the farm](#)

[Fred says colours](#)

[Fred's party](#)

Blending step 2: To help your child learn to read by blending the sounds in simple three letter cvc words (consonant-vowel-consonant), they will need to practise their 'Fred Talking - Read the word' skills. Please use these videos with them at home to help them learn to blend, they can use letter cards or magnetic letters to make their own words as they play:

[Blending with Rosie \(1\)](#)

[Blending with Rosie \(2\)](#)

To extend your child a little further, ask them to try and write one of the words they have read with Rosie. Ask them to hold up their 'Fred Fingers' (three fingers as below) and follow these steps:

1. Say the whole word you wish to spell aloud e.g. "mat"
2. Pinch each finger in turn as you 'Fred Talk' each sound (working from left to right on your fingers).
3. Keep the sounds in your head and write the word!

