

How Mr Butcher teaches us...

There are probably some things which your children come out with where you wonder “*What on Earth are they on about?!*” so here is a quick handy guide to give you a little insight into the weird and wonderful world of Sycamore class!

Maths

- When we add or subtract we ‘put a number in our head’ (with a shhlupp sound effect) and count on or back from that number, sometimes using our fingers to help us keep track.

E.g.: 4 + 5:

“What’s the greater number? 5? Good. Let’s put that in our head. (‘Push it in’ and say Shhlupp!”) Then on our fingers let’s count on 4. (4 fingers up, pinch them as we count on.) 6. 7. 8. 9. We counted on four places and landed on 9 so the answer is 9.”

- “Show me the symbol”: the children show me gestures to indicate mathematical symbols. The main symbols are:
 - Adding: crossed forearms banging against each other in a strictly vertical/horizontal alignment (so they don’t get adding and multiplying confused later in the year).
 - Taking away/subtraction: pushing out to one side with one elbow and their arm laid horizontally, moving back and forth (as though you were elbowing someone in the ribs next to you!).
 - Equals: like taking away/subtraction but both arms working at the same time. The children know that when they use this they are telling me the numbers are the same on both sides, e.g. 3+1 on one side and 4 on the other, or 3+1 on one side and 2+2 on the other.
 - Greater than/less than: for this we use the ‘Greedy crocodiles’ – Greedy crocodiles sit in the middle and always want to eat the bigger number, e.g. $5 > 3$ or $4 < 7$. The children make big snapping jaws with their arms to their left or right to show me which number the crocodile would eat.
 - Later in the year: multiplication will be like adding, only with diagonal arms. Division is a horizontal forearm out in front with punches up and down, up and down for the dots while the children say “*One for you, one for me...*”
- The children may recall the phrase “*When we share we make it fair.*” This phrase reminds them that when they are sharing out or dividing they need to make sure that the groups/portions/numbers need to be of equal size. We have started using this now, but this will be much more prevalent when we begin exploring division and basic fractions after Easter.

Grammar

To recall our ‘basic skills’ we use Kung Fu punctuation moves to remember the things we need to include in our writing, to the tune of the song Kung Fu Fighting (not the original I’m afraid, the CeeLo Green version!

<<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QspjKVTMIL8>>>)

Here are the moves we have learnt so far:

- Finger spaces – karate chops with just your index fingers.
- Full stop – a dramatic punch accompanied by the words “Fulllllll STOP!”
- Capital letter (the same for both the start of sentences and names) – fingers pointed over their heads and balanced on one leg with one knee up in front.
- Question mark – a karate chop hand which draws the shape of a question mark in the air in front of them and ends with a full stop punch (but without the “Fulllllll STOP!” call).