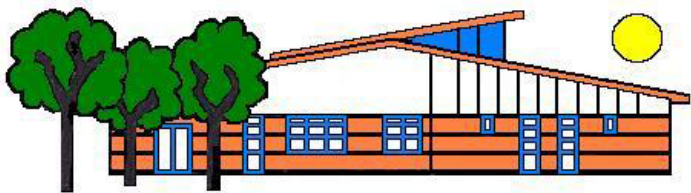
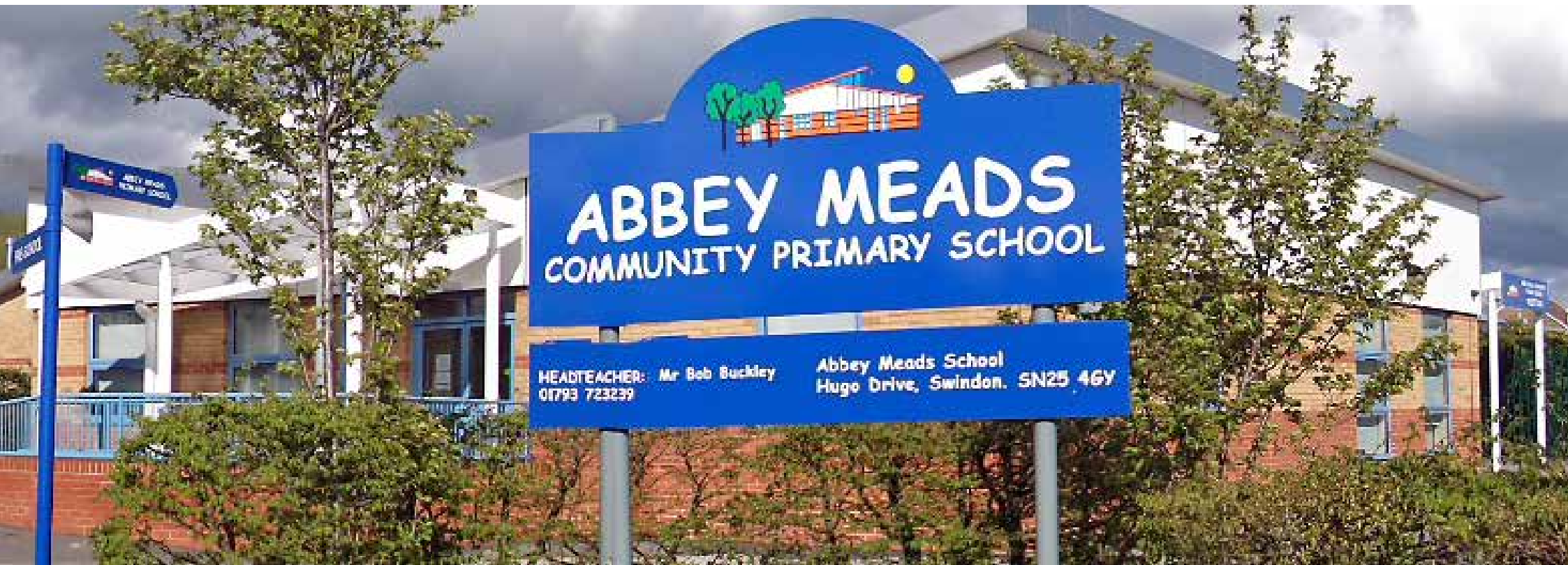


# UNDERSTANDING HOW CHILDREN LEARN TO READ, WRITE AND CALCULATE



**Abbey Meads**  
**Community Primary School**



# Welcome to a guide that shows you how children in Abbey Meads Community Primary School progress in reading, writing and mathematics.



### Up-to-date

I am often told by parents that teaching methods may have changed since they attended school. I hope this guide helps you understand how your child learns at Abbey Meads Community Primary School, giving you an overview of what is involved.

### How to use this guide

You don't need to read it all at once...just use it when needed.

- For example
- if your child was asking you about long division as part of his/her maths homework, you could go to the division page in the 'Learn to Calculate' section
  - if you were worried about your child's writing progress you could check the 'Stages of Writing' page in the 'Learn to Write' section
  - when you are helping with your child's reading at home, you could go to the 'Strategies to Help Read a Book' page in the 'Learn to Read' section

### Workshops

We also hold regular workshops where we help parents to understand how children are taught at Abbey Meads Community Primary School. These are advertised in our weekly newsletter and on the school website.

### Any questions?

If you have any questions concerning how your child learns at Abbey Meads Community Primary School, or don't totally understand our teaching methods, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the class teacher, who will be delighted to help. We value each question, because it shows you want to be involved in your child's education.

**Bob Buckley, Headteacher**



"Julia and I have always been impressed by the individualised curriculum, which provides an engaging, fun and exciting learning environment, both within lessons and on field trips in the local area and further afield, matching the teaching to the needs of the children. We have two very different children who are recognised and supported both academically and socially based on their individual interests and needs." **Julia and Paul Cooper - Abbey Meads Community Primary School**

### Contents

Pages 3-5: Learning to Write

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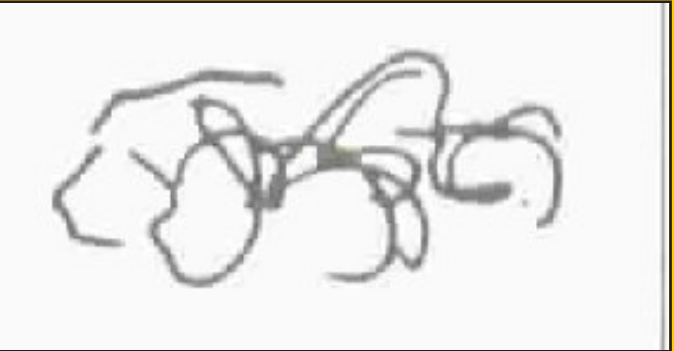
Pages 12-23: Learning to Calculate

# Learning to Write - Stages of Writing

Your child went through several necessary stages in the development of oral language: cooing, babbling and playing with sounds. Similarly, written language development follows predictable stages. These are the stages your child will probably go through as he or she becomes a competent writer.

## Level 1: Emerging/Scribble

This is the beginning level at which your child scribbles.  
You may not be able to tell what the picture is, but it is important to praise your child's attempts at drawing and 'mark making'.



## Level 2: Pictorial

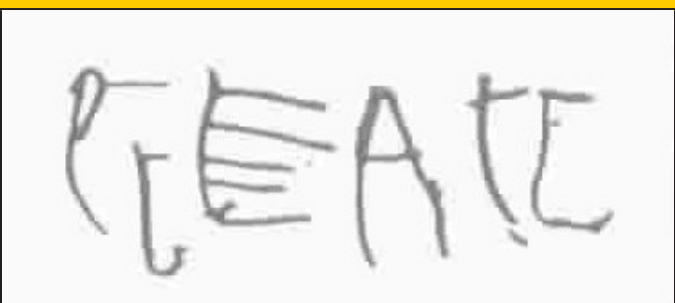
At this level, your child begins to draw a recognisable picture and may tell you about it. He or she may also imitate writing.



The flower is growing.

## Level 3: Precommunicative

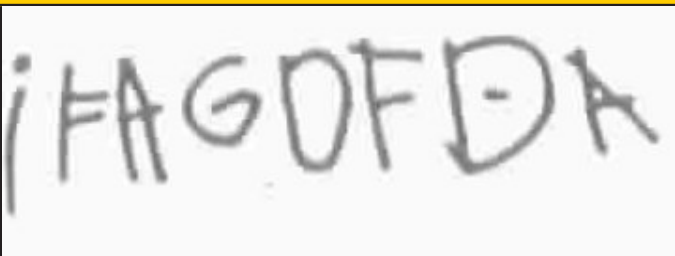
Your child may now be printing his or her own name, or an occasional known word, and may be writing strings of letterlike forms or a series of random letters. These letters are often letters in the child's name. Sometimes he or she may attempt to read the message back.



There are webs in Spidertown.

## Level 4: Semiphonetic

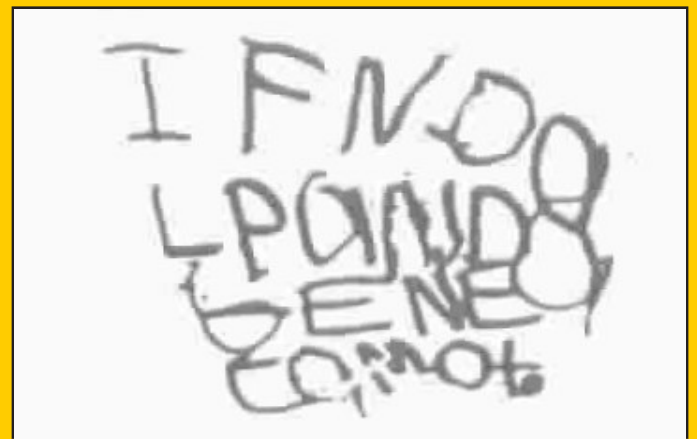
At this level, your child begins to use some letters to match sounds, often using one beginning letter to write a word. He or she usually writes from left to right, but may reverse some letters. Children should be encouraged to write in lowercase letters.



I have a goldfish called Arielle.

## Level 5: Phonetic

Now your child writes most words using beginning and ending consonant sounds and spells some frequently used words correctly. He or she may begin to add vowel sounds, but they are often not the correct ones. At this level, your child may begin to leave spaces between words. It is getting easier to read your child's writing.



I found a lamp and a genie came out.

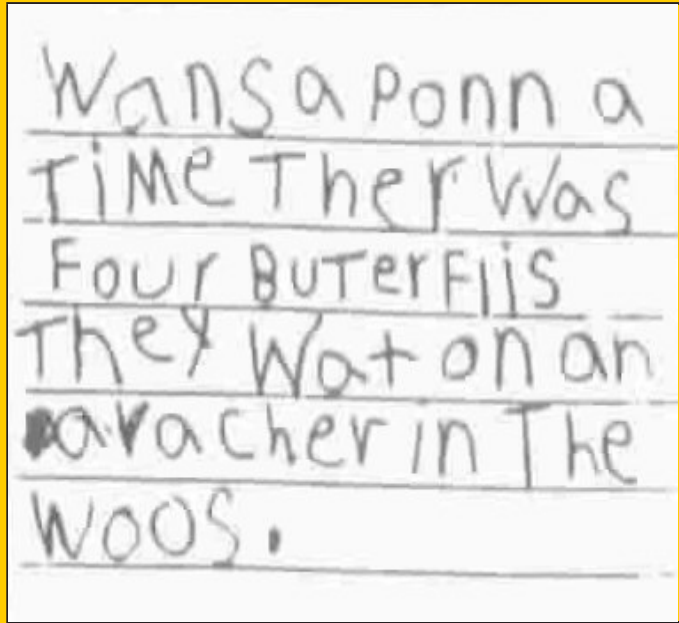




# Learning to Write - Stages of Writing

## Level 6: Transitional

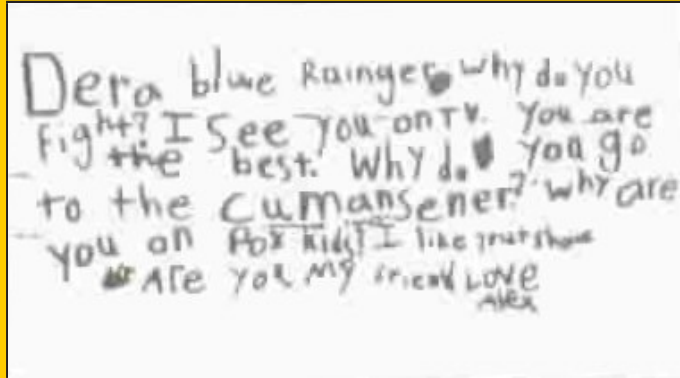
At this level, your child is writing words the way they sound, representing most syllables in words. He or she may sometimes be adding an extra silent 'e' at the end of a word or doubling letters when they are not needed, while trying visually to remember how spelling works. Now your child usually leaves spaces between words and is spelling many words correctly as he or she writes more than one sentence.



Once upon a time, there was (were) four butterflies. They went on an adventure in the woods.

## Level 7: Conventional

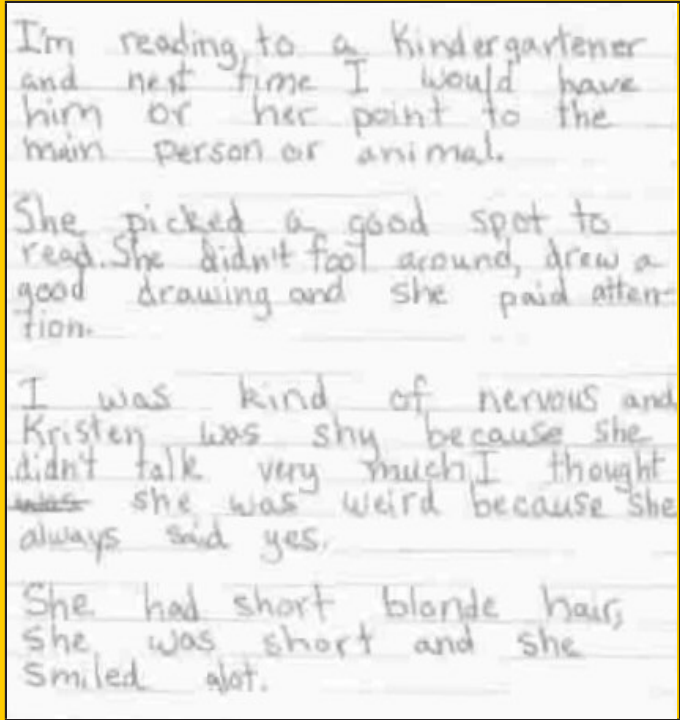
At this level, your child spells most words correctly, although he or she may use phonics-based spelling for advanced words. Remember, we can only expect children to correctly spell words they have already learnt! Now your child is usually using capital and lowercase letters as well as full stops, question marks and exclamation marks correctly.



Dear Blue Ranger, Why do you fight? I see you on TV. You are the best. Why do you go to the command centre? Why are you on Fox Kids? I like your show. Are you my friend? Love, Alex

## Level 8: Traditional

Advanced writers use a rich, varied body of written vocabulary. They may still use phonics-based spelling for advanced words, but have mastered the spelling of commonly used words. At this level, your child uses inverted commas (speech marks), commas and apostrophes correctly and usually organises writing into appropriate paragraphs.



My goal is for each child to enjoy writing and to begin little by little to understand how to become a better writer. Remember, your child learned to speak gradually, and you celebrated each attempt. Together, let's celebrate your child's attempts and gradual growth as a beginning writer! If you have any questions about how you might help at home, ask the class teacher.

# Handwriting Scheme

We have evolved our handwriting scheme over time and children who already have a well developed handwriting style, based on the way they were taught when they started at the school, are encouraged to continue writing in this way.

Reception children (FS2) are now taught a form of the Cursive style, as shown below, and encouraged to join letters as soon as possible. Some children in older age groups may also be introduced to this style if we feel it will help them.

## Letters without joins...

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

## Letters with joins...

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

## A sentence with every letter in it - including joins...

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

## Ideas for encouraging mark making, writing and for developing phonics

Below are a list of ideas for promoting and practising both letter formation and phonics at home:

- Bending and forming playdough into letter shapes
- Baking cookies in different letter shapes
- Painting on an outside wall using water and a brush
- Large chalks on a chalk board or the ground outdoors
- Writing letters with your fingers in shaving foam, flour, sugar, sand etc
- Using foam letters or magnetic letters in the bath/ on the fridge
- Finger painting to practise letter formation
- Using our arms and hands to write huge letters in the air
- Making letters or cards to post to family members and friends
- Using a computer to practise phonics
- Creating letters with our bodies on the floor and taking photographs
- Using everyday objects such as cutlery, shells or pebbles to make letters
- Practise letters learnt so far using taught songs and actions
- Play word recognition snap by writing words on cards and turning them over to match up and read them
- Playing simple games such as 'I spy' or ask children if they can see something beginning with a particular letter sound
- Use magnetic letters or flash cards to build and sound out words
- Put items in a box, ask your child to pick one out and tell you what sound it begins with
- Think of different words that rhyme or words that begin with the same letter and make silly sentences together



# Reading at home – A guide for parents

**Reading is a vital skill that we must teach the children from a young age. At Abbey Meads Community Primary School we promote reading for enjoyment, therefore when you hear your child read at home, it must be a pleasurable experience rather than a chore!**

At school we hear children read all the time. They are taught the skills of reading by the class teacher during Letters and Sounds sessions, literacy lessons and through reading sessions, where we also hear your child read aloud. Teachers make a fortnightly record of your child's progress in the reading record booklet, which comes home for completion by you every night.

In order for your child to make the most progress, we ask that they are heard by an adult at home every day if possible. This need only be for 5 – 10 minutes, but it really does make a difference!

In school, we promote the enjoyment of reading by having a daily story session, where the class will listen to a favourite story or, as they get older, the next stage of the class novel.

Listening to stories is an important part of childhood. Reading is always a great way to spend time with your child and build an enjoyment of books. Children are never too old to enjoy the sharing of a good book.



## Choosing a Book

Every child will be sent home with a reading book that is numbered or coloured, according to its level, or a 'free choice' book for more able readers.

They may also bring home a book they have chosen from the library. These books are for you to share with your child, reading to or with them (not for them to read to you). You could encourage your child to recognise the high frequency words they have been learning at school and at home, or blend simple 3 and 4 letter words together.

The children may also have books at home they might want to read with you. This is great, as long as the children are exposed to a range of books and are enjoying their reading experiences. It is through the choosing of books that children develop their own preferences.

Reading the same book over and over again is a good thing. We want the children to really know stories well. This helps them develop language and storytelling skills. When a child knows what a book 'says', they then have the confidence to read it without fear of getting it wrong.

Libraries are fantastic places to view a range of books, there is always a librarian on hand to help suggest a good book or let you know if something new has come in. The internet is a good way of finding out what new books have been released.

## What Else Can Your Child Read?

- Comics
- Magazines
- Travel brochures
- Recipes
- Instructions for games
- Letters from you, family or friends
- Newspapers
- Sports reports
- Shopping lists



## Creating the Perfect Reading Environment

Here is a list of things you can do to create the perfect reading environment for you and your child:

- Choose somewhere calm and quiet
- Sound excited and enthusiastic when talking about reading
- Have somewhere comfortable to sit together. You will need to see what they are reading and they need to see what you are reading. This could be on their bed, on the sofa etc. (Please make sure the TV is OFF!!)
- Talk about the book before, during and after reading it. (There will be suggested questions later in the booklet)

## Be a Good Role Model for Reading

To be a good role model you must:

1. Handle books with care
2. Let your child see you reading for pleasure
3. Always stay positive and encouraging, even if you are frustrated with your child. Instead, praise them and help them.
4. Continually use positive praise – "Well done, that was brilliant sounding out."
5. Always value and make time for reading



## Strategies to Help Read a Book

There are many ways we can help read a book, these are the 6 main strategies we use in school. We may not use all of them every time; it all depends on the text and the need of the child.

### Making Sense of a Sentence

If a child can't read a word, it sometimes helps to leave the word and carry on reading to the end of the sentence. You can then go back and read it again, often the child will then be able to guess what the word is, especially if they look at the initial sound of the word. They could also look at the pictures to help.

e.g. if reading the sentence - 'The boy ate a ham sandwich, he ate it all up.' - the child cannot read the word 'sandwich', we read the sentence again without the word 'sandwich', it is quite easy to make a sensible guess.

### Use of Phonics

Use the sounds the children are taught at school and blend together the sounds of the letters they can see. Don't forget it's not always 1 sound for every 1 letter. Sometimes 2 or more letters make 1 sound. e.g. 'ea' makes the long 'e' sound.

If children can't blend the sounds themselves, to hear the word, it is often easier to hear the word when an adult says the sounds again. If you are unsure of this, ask your child's teacher for guidance.

### Word Recognition

Some words you just can't sound out, these are called 'tricky words'. Words are sent home to learn through the Key Word Books in Reception classes, followed by the school's spelling system in subsequent years. Each year group has a list of 'High Frequency' words they must learn. If you know the word is one they have learnt, ask your child to try and remember. If they can't, don't worry or get frustrated, tell them the word and see if they can remember it next time. When reading with your child, try saying a word and see if they can find it in the sentence or on the page.

### Rehearsing Reading

Rehearsing a page can help build a child's confidence in reading. Particularly in a more challenging book, try reading a page to them first, emphasising any difficult words. When modelling the reading, use expression and different voices for different characters. Then give them a few minutes to read it to themselves, then they can read the page to you. The more you do this, the more words they will be able to recognise.



# Questions to Ask When Reading

## Before Reading

- What do you think this book is about?
- What does the picture on the front page tell you?
- Where is the title? What does it say?
- Discuss the author and talk about other books they have read written by the same author.

## During Reading

- What is happening in the picture/story?
- What do you think made the character behave that way?
- Have you ever.....?
- Where did....?
- Who did....?

## After Reading

- Who was your favourite character?
- What did you like about the book?
- What was the most exciting part of the book?
- Would you recommend that book to a friend?
- Can you recall main events in the story?
- Is this book like any other book that you have read?
- If so... How are they alike?
- How are they different?
- Which did you like better?



# Questions For Non-fiction Books

- What fact(s) did you enjoy learning about the most?
- Of the information you learned, which would you like to share with someone else?
- Would you like to read more books about this topic? What makes you want to read more books about this topic?
- What else would you like to learn about this topic?
- What makes these pictures or illustrations interesting?
- What kind of research do you think the author had to do to write this book?
- What questions would you ask the author if you ever had the opportunity to meet him/her?
- How can you learn more about this topic?
- Would the book be different if it had been written 10 years ago?
- Did you discover anything that may help you outside of school?

## Bug Club

Bug Club is an on-line reading site for which the school pays an annual subscription. It allows the teachers to allocate children books according to their reading ability.

Each child is given their own username and password to login, where they will find the books allocated by the teacher.

The children can read the books or click to hear the page read to them. They also have to answer questions about what they have read, which allows the teachers to check their understanding of the text.

We have found Bug Club has improved reading levels throughout the school and has given confidence to more reluctant readers.

Visit [www.bugclub.co.uk](http://www.bugclub.co.uk) Please see the class teacher if you do not have your child's login details.



# Reading Records

What to write in my child's reading record:

It is important that reading records are completed at home as it gives the teacher an idea of how often children read and how well they are doing at home.

The table below will give you a few ideas of what to write - please keep your comments positive and factual.

You are not expected to comment on each of the areas each time! Sometimes a smiley face is enough!

- How enthusiastic the child was about the choice of book
- How well the child was able to retell the story, showing their understanding
- What strategies they used to read unfamiliar words
- Interesting words discussed
- High Frequency words they recognised in the text
- How confident they were with reading new words
- Did they answer questions well?
- Was there a common mistake the teacher may need to pick up on in class?
- Did the child recognise when he / she had made a mistake? Did they correct themselves?
- How fluently they read
- How well they used expression

## Useful Reading Websites

[www.letters-and-sounds.com](http://www.letters-and-sounds.com) - Phonics Games  
[www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk) - free online Oxford Reading Tree resources  
[www.bugclub.co.uk](http://www.bugclub.co.uk) - whole school online reading facility  
[www.jollylearning.co.uk](http://www.jollylearning.co.uk) - Jolly phonics  
[www.parentlink.co.uk](http://www.parentlink.co.uk) - contains ideas to help at home  
[www.bbc.co.uk/education](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education) - BBC Education pages  
[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)  
[www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)  
[www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories)  
[www.familylearning.org.uk](http://www.familylearning.org.uk)  
[www.topmarks.co.uk/Search.aspx?subject=31](http://www.topmarks.co.uk/Search.aspx?subject=31)  
[www.readingforlife.org.uk/parents](http://www.readingforlife.org.uk/parents)  
[www.bookstart.org.uk](http://www.bookstart.org.uk)



# FREE apps

Read Me Stories - Children's books  
Sentence Reading Magic  
The Story Mouse Talking Books  
Reading for Kids - I like Reading  
Word Domino  
Read with Biff, Chip & Kipper  
abc Pocket Phonics Lite

## In a Nutshell

Reading is one of the most important skills anybody needs to learn.

To help your children at home:

- Try to read as often as possible with your child
- Create a positive environment for reading
- Model a positive attitude and enthusiasm for reading (your child must know you value reading!)
- Let your child choose a book they enjoy - they don't always have to read it to you!
- Don't forget, memorising a book isn't cheating! It builds confidence, helps them know the structure of a story and makes reading fun!
- Let the child hold the book
- Talk about the book as you read
- Support them in reading new words, don't jump in too quickly and stay positive, even if they can't do it
- If your child is too tired to read to you - read to them
- A bedtime story is a great way to get your child ready for sleep
- Most importantly - ENJOY TIME READING TOGETHER!!!
- "A child who reads well is more likely to be successful in later life"









# Learning to Calculate

## Maths at home – A guide for parents

**+ – × ÷**

### Introduction

Written methods of calculations are based on mental strategies. Each of the four operations builds on secure mental skills which provide the foundation for jottings and informal written methods of recording. Skills need to be taught, practised and reviewed constantly. These skills lead on to more formal written methods of calculation.

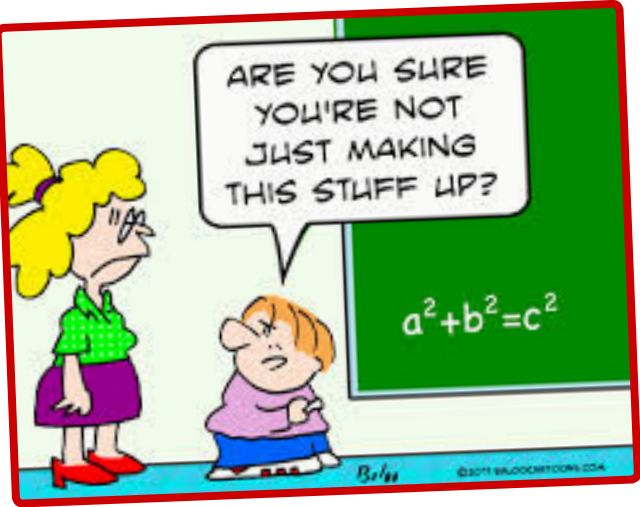
Strategies for calculation must be supported by familiar models and images. When approaching a new strategy it is important to start with numbers that the child can easily manipulate so that they have every opportunity to fully grasp each concept.

The transition between stages should not be hurried as not all children will be ready to move on to the next stage at the same time, therefore the progression in this document is outlined in stages. Previous stages may need to be revisited to consolidate understanding before progressing. Failure to secure understanding can lead to misconceptions later. It is essential that learning is personalised for every child to ensure solid mathematical foundations are laid, which can be built upon in the future.

A sound understanding of the number system “and the patterns within it” is essential for children to carry out calculations efficiently and accurately.

The next section is our school's Visual Calculation Policy, which we hope will help you support your child in maths at home.

You can also find some videos on our website in the maths section of the Learning Gateway.



# Abbey Meads Community Primary School

## Visual Calculation Policy

### KC1: Key Concepts!

#### Addition

**+**

$$8 + 2 = 10$$

“What is 8 add 2?”  
Answer: 10

#### Subtraction

**-**

$$8 - 2 = 6$$

“What is 8 subtract 2?”  
Answer: 6  
“The difference between 8 and 2 is 6”

### KC2: Key Concepts!

#### Multiplication

**x**

$$8 \times 2 = 16$$

“8 multiplied by 2” means  
“8, 2 times” or  
“2 groups of 8”

#### Division

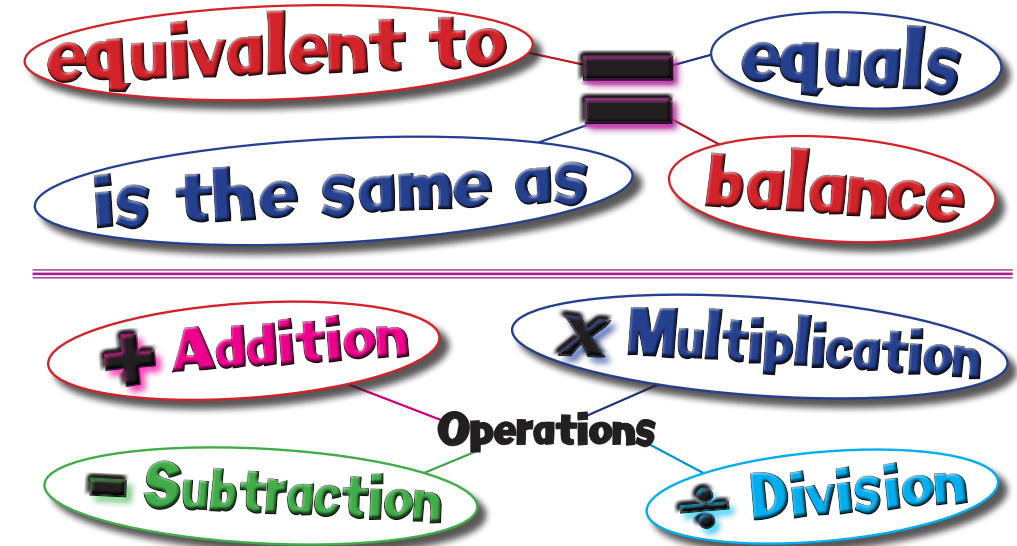
**÷**

$$8 \div 2 = 4$$

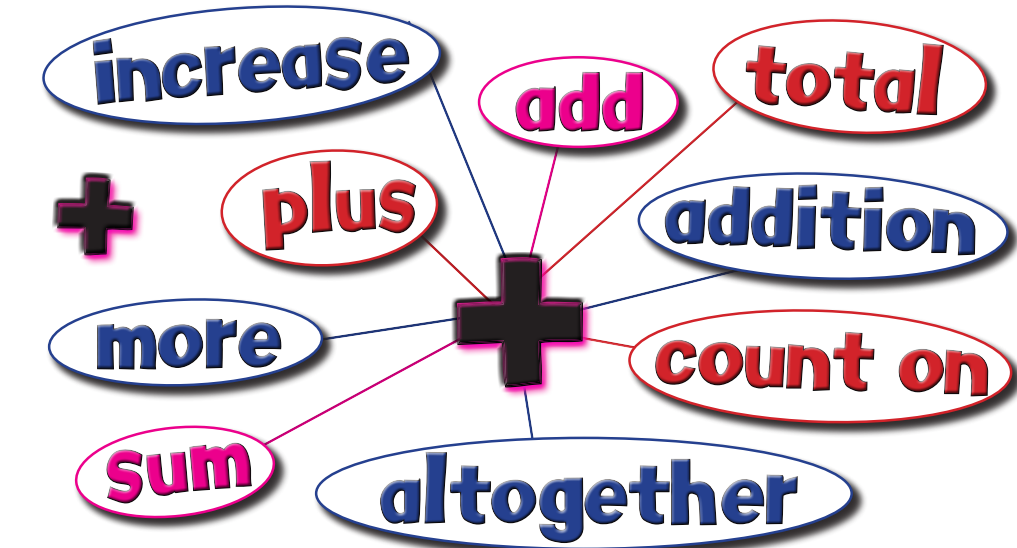
“8 divided by 2” means “How many groups of 2 are there in 8?” Answer: 4  
(“8 shared into 2 sets is 4”)



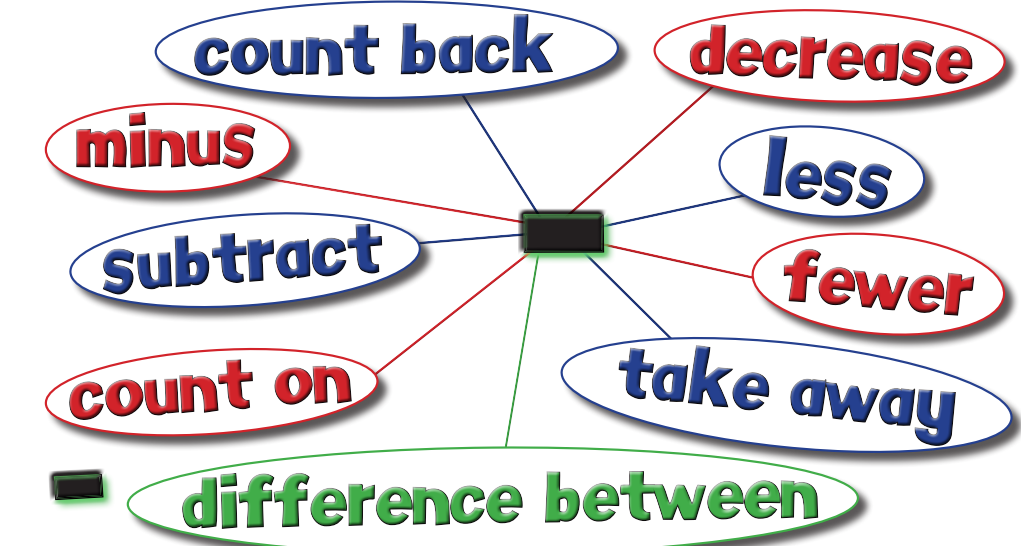
## Calculation Vocabulary



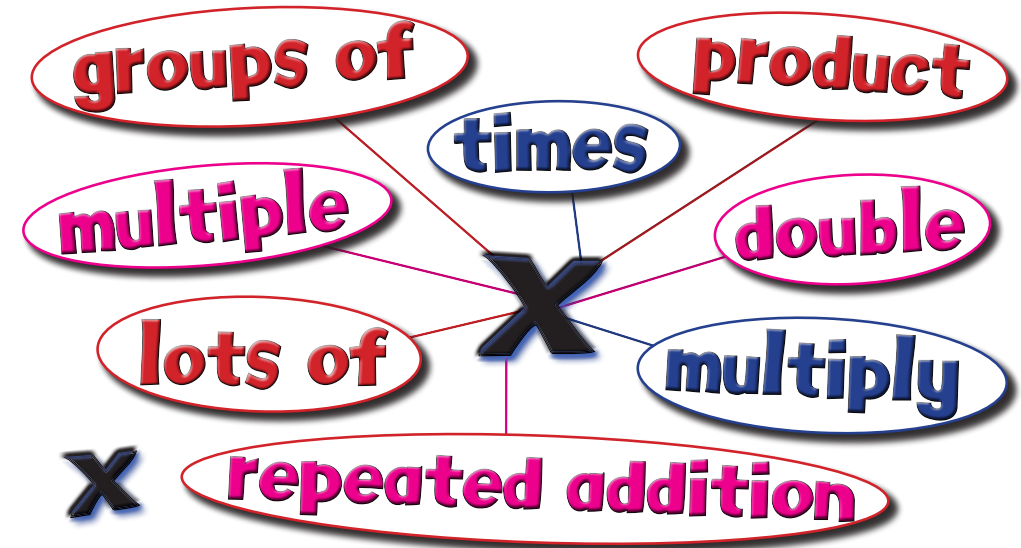
## Addition Vocabulary



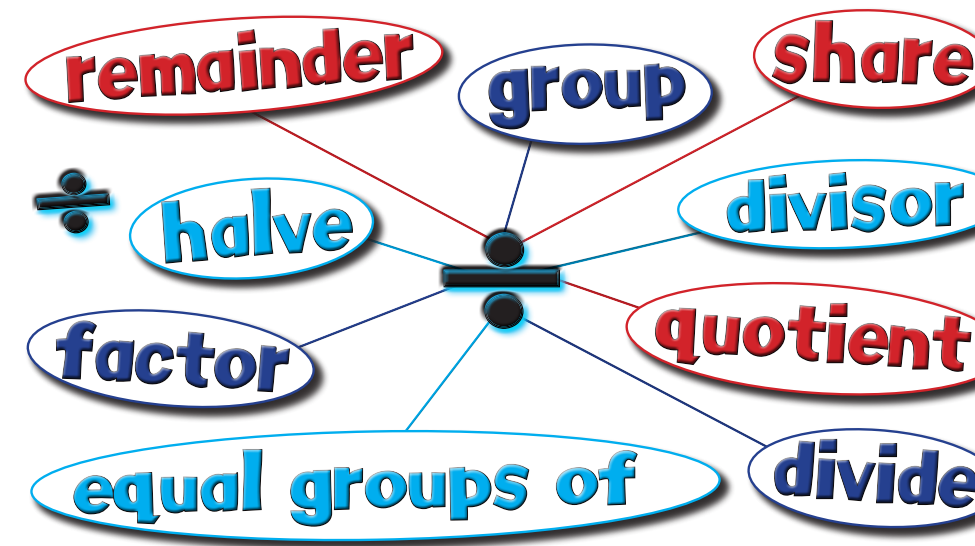
## Subtraction Vocabulary



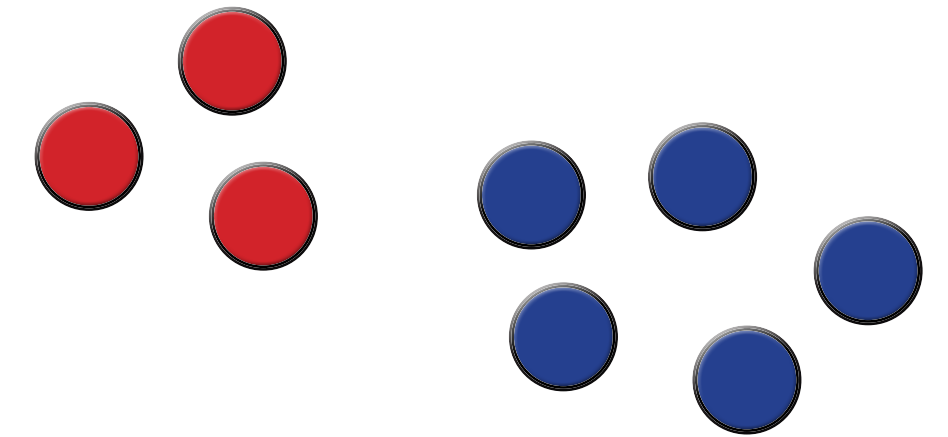
## Multiplication Vocabulary



## Division Vocabulary

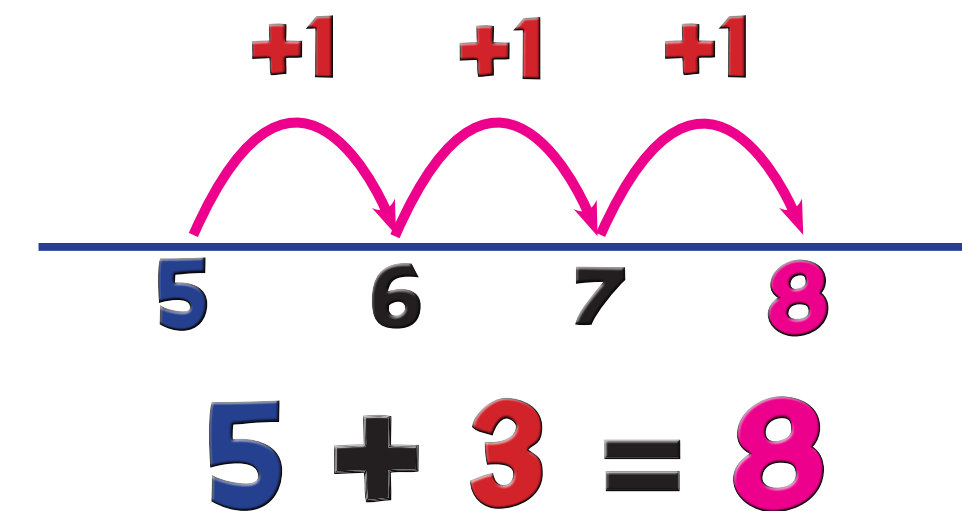


## A1: Objects & Pictures

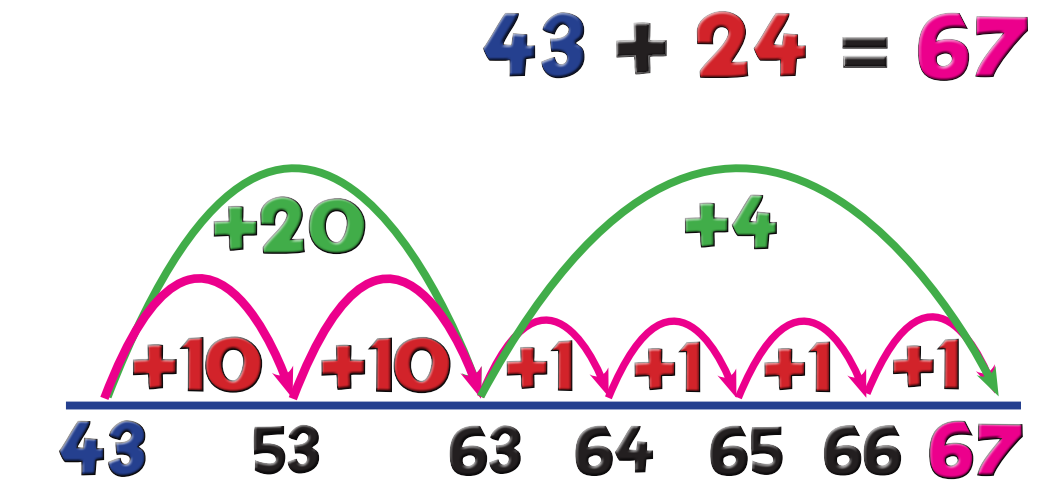


"If I have 3 and then 5 more, how many altogether? Answer: 8"

## A2: Counting On



## A3: Forwards Jump



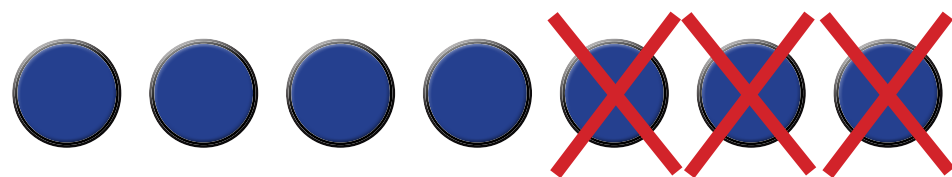


## A4: Partitioning

$$26 + 35 = 61$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 20 + 6 \\ + 30 + 5 \\ \hline 60 + 1 \\ \hline 10 \end{array}$$

## S1: Objects



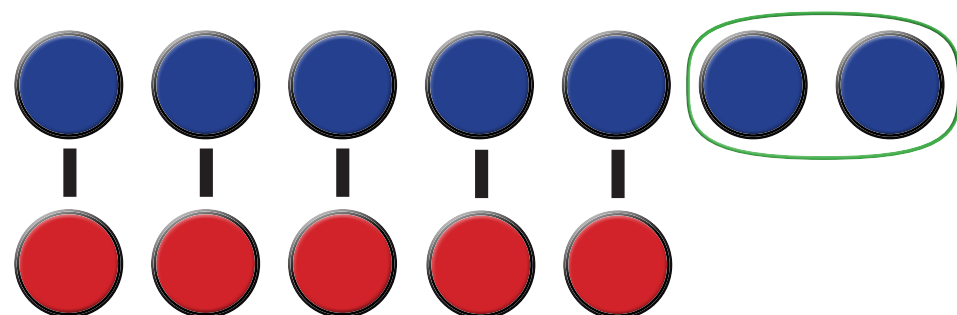
$$7 - 3 = 4$$

"What do I get if I take 3 away from 7? Answer: 4"

## A5: Column Addition

$$\begin{array}{r} \begin{smallmatrix} 100 & 10 & 1 \end{smallmatrix} \\ 687 \\ + 248 \\ \hline 935 \\ \hline \begin{smallmatrix} 1 & 1 \end{smallmatrix} \end{array}$$

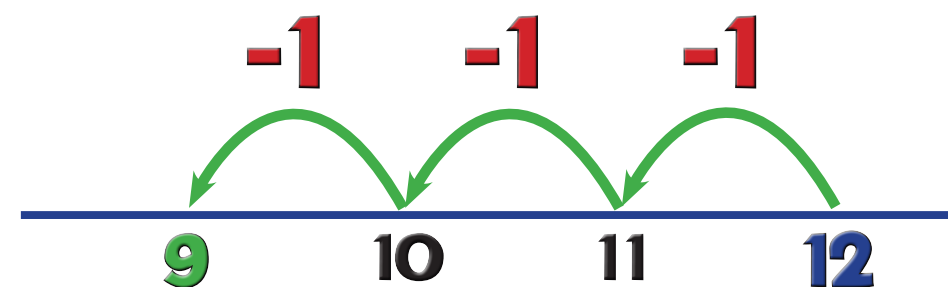
## S2: What's the Difference?



$$7 - 5 = 2$$

"How many more is 7 than 5? What is the difference?"

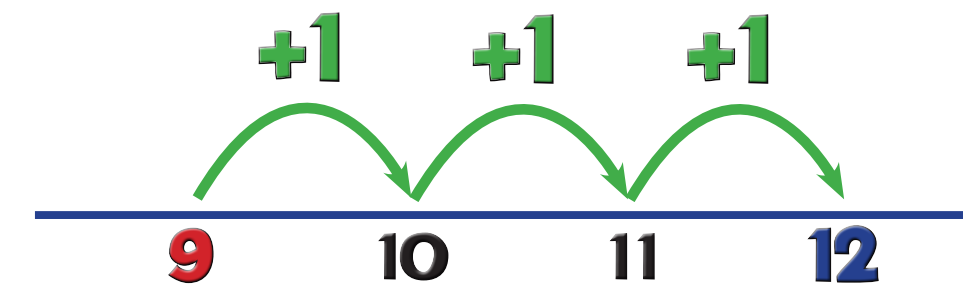
## S3: Counting Back



$$12 - 3 = 9$$

"What do I get if I take 3 away from 12? Answer: 9"

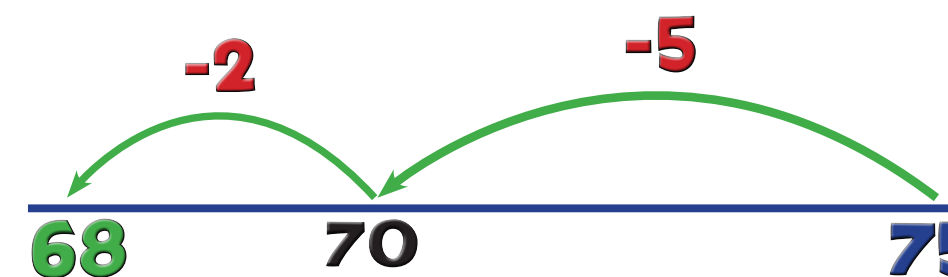
## S4: Counting On



$$12 - 9 = 3$$

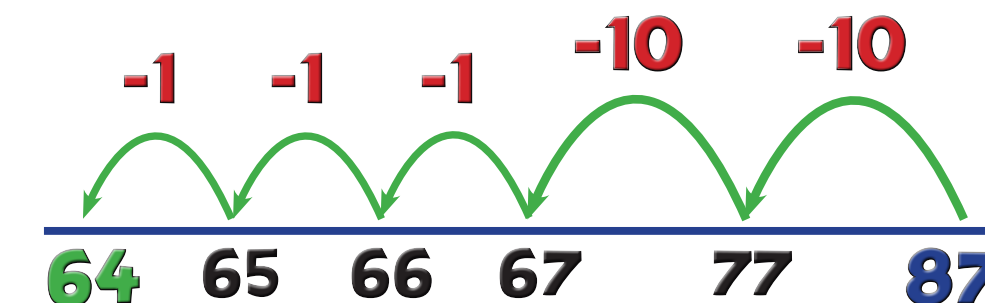
"How many more is 12 than 9? What is the difference?"

## S5: Backwards Boing



$$75 - 7 = 68$$

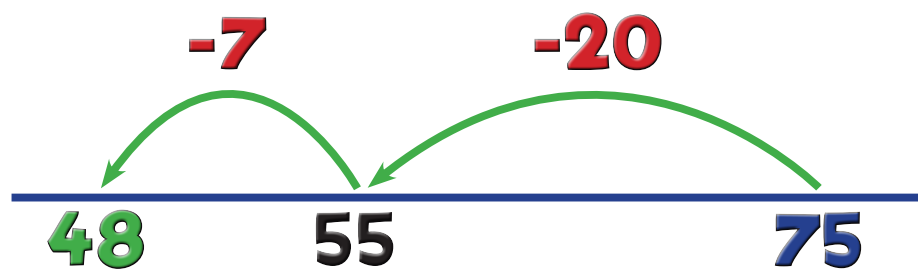
## S6: Backwards Bounce



$$87 - 23 = 64$$



## S7: Backwards Jump



$$75 - 27 = 48$$

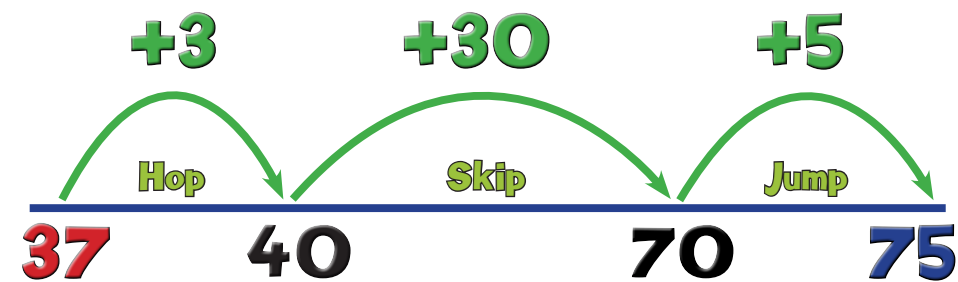
## S9: Expanded Column

Subtraction (100, 10, 1s)

$$723 - 356 = 367$$

600	110	1
<del>700</del>	<del>20</del>	3
- 300	50	6
300	60	7

## S8: Triple Jump!



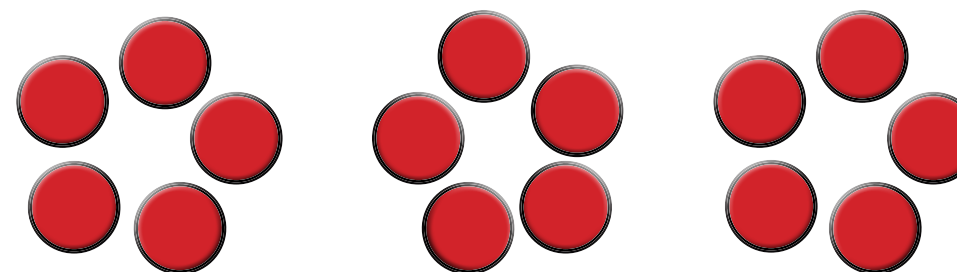
$$75 - 37 = 38$$

## S10: Column Subtraction

	100	10	1
	6	11	1
	<del>7</del>	<del>2</del>	3
-	3	5	6
	3	6	7

## M1: Repeated Addition

(Groups)

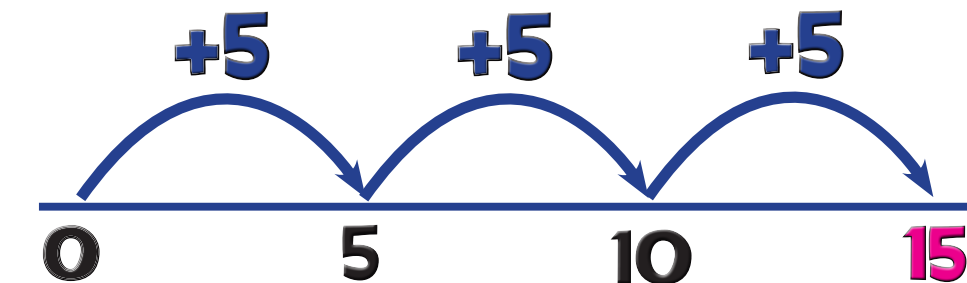


$$5 \times 3 = 5 + 5 + 5 = 15$$

"5 multiplied by 3" means "5, 3 times", which gives "3 lots of 5"!

## M2: Repeated Addition

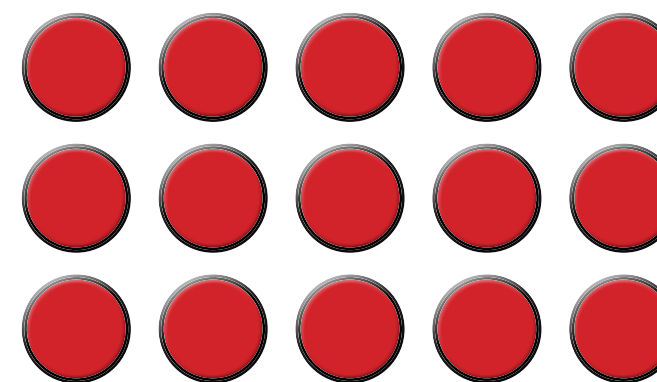
(Number Line)



$$5 \times 3 = 5 + 5 + 5 = 15$$

"5 times 3" means "5, 3 times"!

## M3: Arrays



$$3 \times 5 = 15 \text{ or } 5 \times 3 = 15$$

## M4: Grid Method

Short Multiplication

$$123 \times 5 = 615$$

x	5
100	500
20	100
3	15
	615



## M5: Column Multiplication

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{100} \quad \text{10} \quad \text{1} \\ 147 \\ \times \quad 4 \\ \hline 588 \\ \hline \text{1} \quad \text{2} \end{array}$$

## M7: Long Multiplication Column

$$\begin{array}{r} 43 \\ \times 65 \\ \hline 215 \quad (5 \times 43) \\ + 2580 \quad (60 \times 43) \\ \hline 2795 \end{array}$$

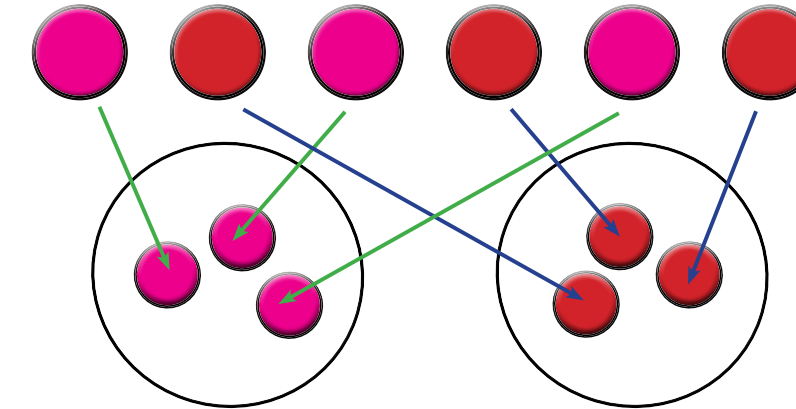
## M6: Grid Method

Long Multiplication

$$23 \times 12 = 276$$

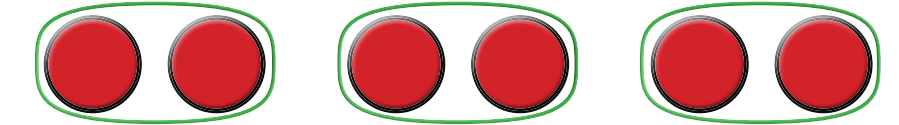
x	10	2	
20	200	40	240
3	30	6	36
			276

## D1: Sharing (Concept)



"If I share 6 into 2 equal amounts, how many in each group?" Answer: 3

## D2: Grouping (Concept)

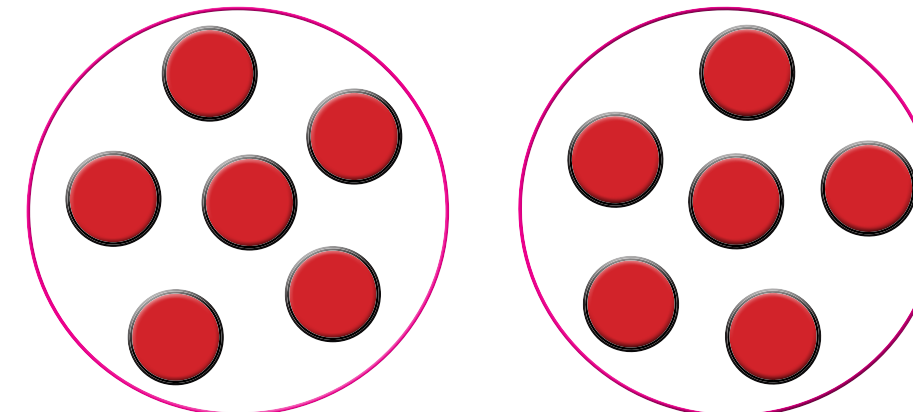


"How many groups of 2 can I make out of 6?" Answer: 3

## D3: Division as Sharing

$$12 \div 2 = 6$$

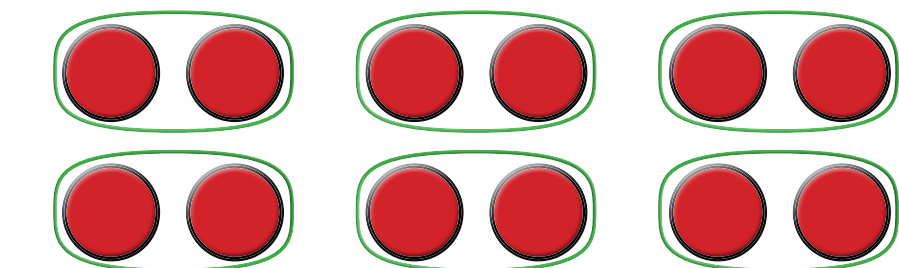
"If I share 12 into 2 equal amounts, how many in each group?" Answer: 6



## D4: Division as Grouping

$$12 \div 2 = 6$$

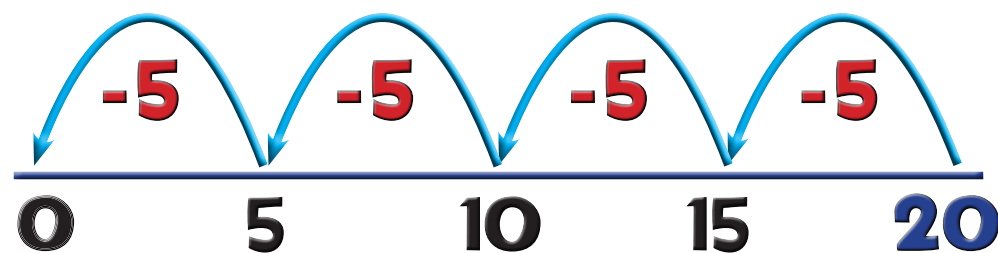
"How many groups of 2 can I fit into 12?" Answer: 6





## D5: Grouping on a Number Line

$$20 \div 5 = 4$$

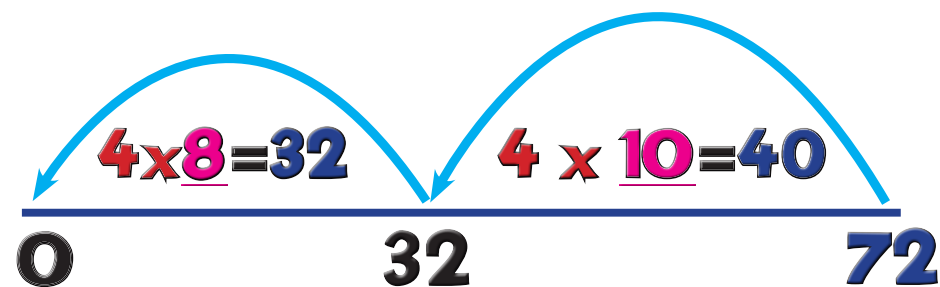


## D7: Chunking

$$\begin{array}{r} 14 \\ 3 \overline{)42} \\ \underline{-30} \quad (10 \times 3) \\ 12 \\ \underline{-12} \quad (4 \times 3) \\ 0 \end{array}$$

$$42 \div 3 = 14$$

## D6: Chunking Jump



$$72 \div 4 = 18$$

## D8: Short Division

$$136 \div 4 = 34$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 34 \\ 4 \overline{)136} \end{array}$$

## D9: Long Division

Short Division Method

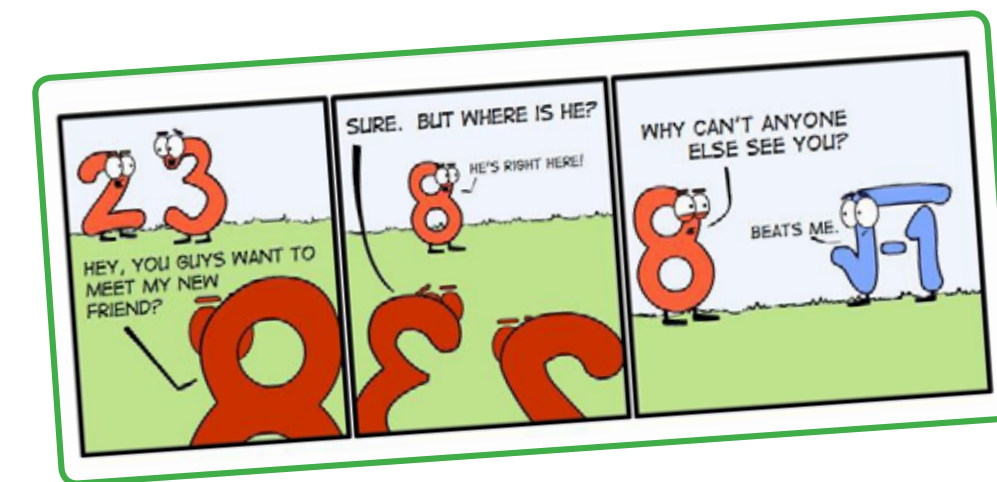
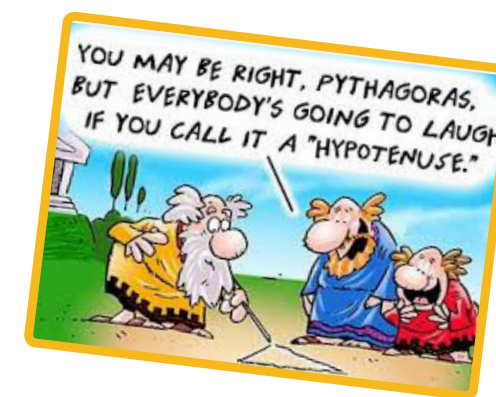
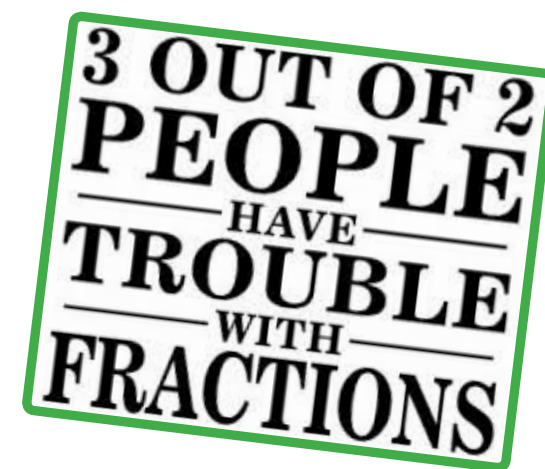
$$\begin{array}{r} 26r21 \\ 37 \overline{)983} \end{array}$$

## D10: Long Division

Traditional Method

$$\begin{array}{r} 26r21 \\ 37 \overline{)983} \\ \underline{-74} \phantom{00} \\ 243 \\ \underline{-222} \\ 21 \end{array}$$

$$983 \div 37 = 26r21$$







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Head Teacher: Mr R M Buckley

# How many boots can you see?.....