



Learning Update – Spring 1 2017

Growth Mindset

Our work on growth mindset continues this term with us learning how the brain is structured and the important role that each part of the brain plays in our everyday lives.



We have already looked at how important practice is in mastering our skills and understanding – the 10,000 hours concept. Whilst some may dispute this figure, it is hard to disagree that practice greatly helps us to get better. Some may still argue that talent and luck play a major part in success, but Gary Player made perfect sense when he said 'The more I practise, the luckier I get'.

To further emphasise the importance of practice, we will be looking at how neural pathways, our superhighways of brain cells, are strengthened through repetition. Conversely, we will also look at what happens to them when we neglect particular pathways. The analogy of a superhighway and a neglected B road helps us to understand the idea of 'use it or lose it'.



Through our study of the brain over the next two terms, we will learn a little about what each part of brain is responsible for and how all the different parts work together, allowing us to live our lives. We will also look at ways we can take care of our brain and what can happen if we become ill or have an accident. Finally, we will consider how our emotions affect our behaviour and what we can do to successfully manage our 'chimps'*.



Our continued work on growth mindset will link with our work with the local community, particularly Lindengate and our 'Go-Givers' charity work for dementia.

*Chimp Management will be explored in the summer term.

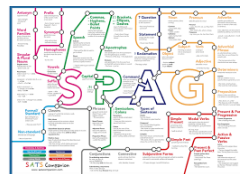
Writing

As you know, one of our key focus areas for improvement this year is writing. There are increased expectations as to what children should be able to do by the end of primary school.



This is perhaps more evident in writing than in other areas. In particular, there is a far greater emphasis on the accuracy of writing than ever before (use of punctuation, grammar and spelling).

Whilst we still place great emphasis on what the children write (the composition and effect – how they hook the reader and maintain their interest, painting a picture in the reader's mind with their words) we are also concentrating on grammar and spelling. We are using a range of resources and activities in school so that children learn new terminology whilst maintaining their enthusiasm for writing. One such resource, shortly to be available on the school website, is the SPAG tube map (spelling, punctuation & grammar); this contains the grammatical terminology your child will be expected to know by the end of Year 6.



We have re-shaped the way in which we teach writing at WCEJS. You have probably already heard of 'Talk 4 Writing', text mapping and washing lines. This approach helps children to learn the text type (the overall structure and the techniques the writer uses) before they experiment for themselves. We are experimenting with 'cold' and 'hot' writes and really encouraging children to see redrafting as a crucial part of the writing process.

If you would like to know more about the way your child learns to write, then please come along to our **information session for parents on Wednesday 15 March, 8.40 – 9.30am.**