

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

3: Talking about maths problems which use words and numbers

It is important that you focus on how your child thinks about and figures out maths problems rather than just looking for the right answer. You can do this by giving 'nudges' to help solve problems. Praise your child for thinking about the problem and talking about it.

Many children can struggle a bit with word problems, especially at the beginning. They have to be able to **read** the problem, **identify what maths** they are being asked to do, **estimate** what might be a reasonable answer and then **solve** the problem. When you are working with your child you can help by asking good questions. These are some of the 'nudges' we mentioned earlier.

What is it asking you to do?

What do you think the problem is about?

What do you think the answer might be?

Are there any words you don't understand?



Encourage your child to work out a rough answer in his or her head. This will help to get an idea of what the answer might be. It's what we do in real-life as adults. *I made 19 raisin buns and 24 plain buns. That's roughly $20+24$, so it's about 44.*

In first and second classes children will begin to use different ways to add and subtract in their heads. We call these **strategies**. They may still need to use their fingers, a number line or a 100-square to help them and this is fine. You can help your child to find ways to work with numbers quickly. Call out a series of numbers and get your child to add them quickly and silently, for example $2+5+9$. *What's the answer?* When adding two numbers, encourage your child to start with the bigger number. For example, if the sum is $5+17$ suggest starting with 17 and counting on.

Have a look at the video **Helping with homework** and you will see children using different strategies to add.

See www.ncca.ie/primaryparents for more information including video clips.

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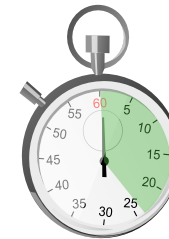
→ Parents → Primary → First and second classes

Helping your child with maths in SECOND CLASS

By second class children still have lots of questions about everyday life. They want to know what things cost, how much things weigh, how far it is to Granny's house and interesting facts like the biggest dinosaur, the smallest insect or the tallest building.

You can involve your child in important jobs like watching out for fuel prices at garages. *Which garage has the cheapest price per litre?* If you have a pet you can ask your child to measure out feeds. Talk about a match. *Your GAA team got 3 goals (a goal is worth 3 points) and 2 points and the other team got 2 goals and 12 points. Who won the match and by how much?*

When you're in the garden or the park use the stopwatch on your mobile phone to time running races. *Can you run faster now than a month ago? Can you bounce the ball more times within a minute?*



About this tip sheet

There are three sections in this tip sheet.

1: What your child is learning in school tells you about the maths your child will learn in second class based on the Mathematics Curriculum for primary schools.

2: How your child learns at home gives you tips to help your child with maths. There are also short video clips in the parents' section of the NCCA website at www.ncca.ie/primaryparents

3: Talking about maths problems This section looks at how you can help your child with maths problems which use words as well as numbers.

You can find more ideas in the tip sheets and videos for first and third classes.



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1: What your child is learning in school

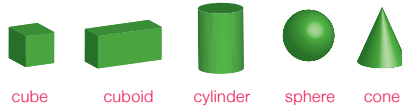
Here is some of the maths your child will learn in second class.

- **Read and write** the numbers **0–200**. Ask: *What number comes after 36? Before 129?*
- Understand the **value of numbers**, for example the 4 in 54 means 4 units; the 3 in 30 means 3 tens; the 1 in 126 means 1 hundred.
- Know and understand **addition tables up to 20**, for example $7+8=15$, $9+9=18$.
- **Estimate** answers to sums by getting a 'rough answer' first, for example $42+29$. As 42 is close to 40 and 29 is close to 30, adding 40 and 30 will give an answer close to the real one.
- **Add and subtract** numbers with a total **less than 100**. Your child will also learn to add 10 or a lot of 10s to a number, for example $36+10=46$, $36+20$ (2 tens)=56.
- **Rename or regroup numbers**. Your child will use renaming when doing subtraction sums like $34 - 19$

Visit www.ncca.ie/primaryparents for a video on renaming.

Your child will also learn to:

- identify **halves and quarters** of objects and of groups of things.
- work out the next number in a **pattern**, for example 3, 5, 7, 9, ..., what numbers come next?
- **identify shapes** such as a square, rectangle, triangle, circle, semi-circle, oval (2-D or flat shapes) and cube, cuboid, cylinder, sphere and cone (3-D or shapes that are not flat).



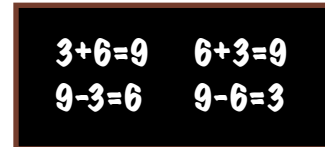
- **measure lengths** using metres and centimetres; **weigh objects** using kilos, half-kilos and quarter-kilos; **measure liquids** using litres, half-litres and quarter-litres.
- **read time** in **hours, half-hours and quarter-hours** and use a **calendar** to find important dates.
- **recognise, exchange and use money** up to **€2**. Your child should be able to swap coins for other coins of the same value, for example €1 for two 50 cent coins or five 10 cent coins for a 50 cent coin.

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2: How your child learns at home

Understand addition tables to 20

It is important that children can recall certain facts quickly or know what to do if they are stuck, for example if your child doesn't know $3+6$ try asking $6+3$. Subtraction tables are important too. For example, if your child knows $3+6=9$ and $6+3=9$, then he or she should also begin to understand that $9-6=3$ and $9-3=6$. These are called the **four facts**.



$$3+6=9 \quad 6+3=9$$

$$9-3=6 \quad 9-6=3$$

Recognise, swap and use money

Encourage your child to add up the coins in your purse or to work out what change you will get when buying things: *I have €1.70 in my pocket. What is the least number of coins I could have? We're coming to the toll plaza. The toll is €2.40. Can you get the coins ready for the machine please?*

Fractions

Involve your child in cutting an apple into quarters or in dividing the chocolate bar in half. When playing a board game, ask your child to share out the counters equally between the two or four players.

Measure activities

Ask *who is the shortest/tallest in our house? About how long is our garden?* Make a paper aeroplane and test it to see how far it flies. Measure the distance in metres and centimetres using a measuring tape. Encourage your child to look at the weights of items in the cupboard. *How many grams in a kilogram (1000)? So 500g is half a kilogram. How many of these packets would add up to a kilogram? If 1 kilogram costs €2, how much would 4 kilograms cost? Look at containers you have at home. Which bottles hold a litre? A half-litre? A quarter-litre?*

Read times and use a calendar

Ask your child to find family birthdays on a calendar. Work out how many weeks or days it will be until the holidays or Granda's birthday. Ask your child to mark the Tuesdays for swimming. *How many swim days are in the month? What dates will we be swimming?* Your child can check the 'use by' date on groceries and work out how many days are left before the item goes out of date.

