



Newsletter 13

Friday 6th January 2017

Dear Parents and JIS community

Welcome back to school – Happy New Year for 2017

School is back to normal and is now in full swing for the coming term ahead. We have lots to look forward to as we head into preparations for our next school production – ‘Willy Wonka Junior’, the battle of the books competitions, half year school reports, new units of inquiry, trips out from school and much more!

Chinese New Year

In such an international world it is a rush to move from one significant festival to another and of course we begin to focus our attention on the arrival of Chinese New Year and the year of the rooster. Our school celebrations day will be on Thursday 26th January with a lion dance, P5 class assembly and our traditional community shared lunch. As Friday 27th January is New Year’s eve we shall close the school at 12pm – noon to enable our Chinese families and staff to get home in time for their family celebrations. More news later as we get closer to the events.



JIS – Fundraising and social engagement January 2017

JIS is a school with a big heart and we believe it is a very important part of our student and school development that we engage with different aspects of community in Hong Kong and around the world with fundraising, support and engagement. In previous years we have successfully managed this with aspects of recycling or ‘upcycling’ as it is now sometimes referred to; as well as some fundraising appeals. As we build up to the Chinese New Year festival and in between the Christmas / New Year festivities we ask that you help us by getting involved in a variety of ways:

Donate and clear out the bedrooms / wardrobes / toy cupboards for a New Year sort out!

Chinese New Year food collection – send in to school, 1st floor lobby area. (Before 25th Jan)

We shall be collecting boxes, bags, tins of food to donate to a local charity – ‘Food Angel’ who do some amazing work with local families who struggle to provide adequate food for their families. If we can collect a large range of rice, pasta, noodles, boxed snacks, tins of sauces / vegetables we will arrange a donation to Food Angel to support some families for Chinese New Year meal and celebration.

Clothing and toys: (Before 25th Jan)

Some of the students in P6 requested that we also collect clothing and toys that could be used by local charities, such as Salvation Army or other local organisations. Please check your closets and wardrobes to find good quality clothes that children have grown out of or your children no longer wear. As the weather may be getting cooler, check for coats, jackets as well. If Father Christmas arrived again this year or laisee packets are about to provide new toys for your family – please have a look in the toy box and see what could give some other children joy, happiness and a smile. Send the clean and working toys or games in to the school – 1st floor lobby area.

Book sale – ESSPA and JIS: (Before 6th February)

Finally, have a good look at your children’s bookshelves! Every 2 years ESSPA and the school organize a charity book sale to give a fresh look to your book shelves and also raise some money for two very good causes – Room to Read charity and JIS library! Basically, send in your good quality unused or unloved

books that are no longer needed at home and we arrange a book sale at school of these books. We sell them back at prices from \$5-\$10+ or so to the students during a book sale on 8th February. Send your books in to the school office ready for the sale any time in the next few weeks.

Thank you in advance for your kind support. Please talk to your children at home about 'why' we are doing these events. We shall also use school assembly and class meetings time to spread the ideas and understandings about giving and the purposes of supporting others less fortunate than ourselves.

Around school updates:

School uniform:

The weather is fabulous at the moment but we may be getting some cooler weather in the coming weeks. Please can I ask that you make sure your children are wearing correct school uniform at all times. We have a range of winter clothing available from the school shop, to order and collect or visit the shop to browse. Branded and sports sweatshirts are not school uniform. Please also support us in being consistent – school shoes should be main colour black for all days when P.E. lessons are not happening. Sports shoes can be sport shoes but should not be worn for everyday of the week – just for P.E days only.

Mandarin class narcissus bulb growing:

A quick reminder from Laoshi for all students in Mandarin class to make sure they bring in a container in which to grow their CNY narcissus bulbs. They will be set up and allowed to bloom in the school lobby over the next few weeks.

Japanese class – Saturday school:

A letter is attached to this email for those wishing their children to join the Saturday class for Japanese.

P1 and P6 Immunisations:

Thursday 12th Jan, next week will be the next visit by the Student Health services to school for our P1 and P6 students. Forms have been sent home on Thursday 5th January.

School uniform shop – change of opening – next week:

Next week the school uniform shop will be open on 11th Jan (Wednesday) not the usual Friday opening day.

JIS Calendar for 2017-18 – draft 1:

We have created draft 1 of the 2017-18 JIS calendar (attached) and it is also on the front page of the school website – calendar updates, just below the weekly news – should you ever need a reference copy. This first draft indicates the proposed main term dates with some provisional events added.



Curriculum in the Classroom – from Cath Wan PYP Coordinator

Mathematics around the world, in the PYP and at JIS

The teaching of mathematics has changed since most of us were at school and is often an area for lively discussion. We will look at recent development worldwide and how this translates into our curriculum.

Why the change?

Studies from multiple sources tell us that by the time our students leave school, most of the 'rote' type jobs will have been taken over by automation. Key skills for the future, have been identified by multiple sources as the ability to think critically and creatively. As technology has advanced, so has our understanding of how learning happens in the brain. Learning develops when connections are 'fired' in the brain. This 'firing' is enhanced by facing mental challenges that require deep thinking. A child who rote learns without understanding is 'surface learning', there is simply not enough challenge to really push the child's thinking and develop the skills they will need when they leave school.

Mathematics in the IB

The International Baccalaureate provides a "scope and sequence" document which provides learning objectives across the primary years. The objectives give standards in Number, Pattern and Function, Data

Handling, Measurement and Shape and Space. These categories are in line with most mathematics curriculums around the world.

The IB stresses the importance of how children learn deeply- an ongoing cycle **of constructing meaning** (through connections to relevant contexts, giving a firm foundation for more abstract thought); **transferring meaning** (pictures, drawings modelling, mathematical notation) and **applying with understanding**. A common theme recent assessment research is: you cannot be certain that a child understands something until they use it. A child may be able to fill in neat worksheets, but unless they understand the mathematical concepts behind them and can apply those concepts to different situations, there is a risk of the child being hindered at higher levels of mathematics because of lack of solid foundation.

Mathematics at JIS

JIS bases its learning objectives on the IB Scope and Sequence, but has also cross – referenced these with British, American and Australian curriculums to ensure transferability. Class teachers teach maths in 2 ways:

- as integrated subject so that connections can be made across disciplines
- as a ‘stand-alone’ subject where students study ‘maths for maths sake’

One question that parents often ask is: “do you teach things like multiplication tables and maths facts?” The answer is absolutely yes! However, we teach them *deeply*. Children can easily be taught to rattle off their multiplication tables. However to develop understanding of the concept of multiplication, how it is related to other operations, how it can be used to solve problems both practical and abstract (the joy and challenge of exercising our brain should not be overlooked) takes it to a whole new level.

Most of the staff at JIS are now currently half way through an online course led by Stanford University Professor of Mathematics, Jo Boaler. One of the things she is absolutely adamant about (backed up by Stanford University Psychology professors) is that challenging children to the point of frustration actually grows brain connections – it makes them smarter!

Try this simple exercises on your children (or yourself) and reflect on the following:

- 1) In which exercises are you practising math facts? If so, which facts are you practising?
- 2) Can you ‘just get by’ with rote learning on these exercises or do you have to understand how addition and subtraction work?
- 3) Which exercise makes the brain go to that wonderful point of challenge – the point where you are ‘growing your brain’?

Exercise 1

Complete the following:

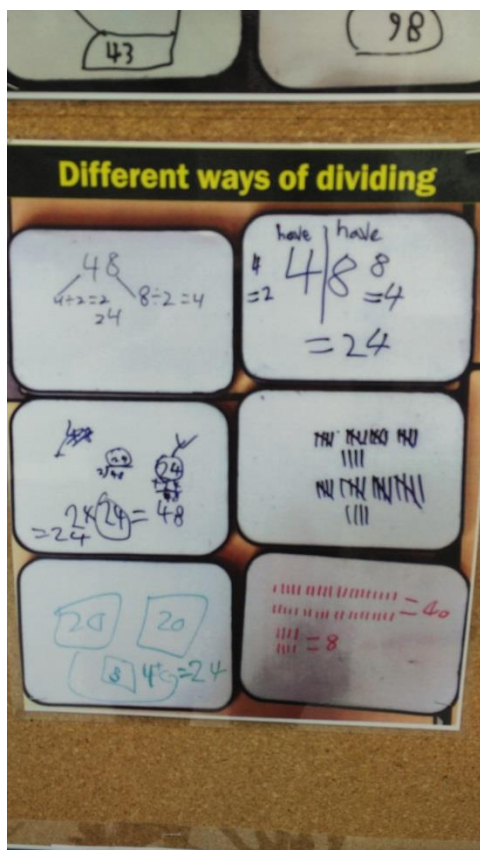
$5 + 1 + 3 =$	$6 + 4 + 1 =$	$6 + 6 + 3 =$
$8 + 3 + 4 =$	$5 + 5 + 5 =$	$4 + 4 + 3 =$
$9 + 7 + 2 =$	$6 + 7 + 3 =$	$2 + 3 + 7 =$

Exercise 2

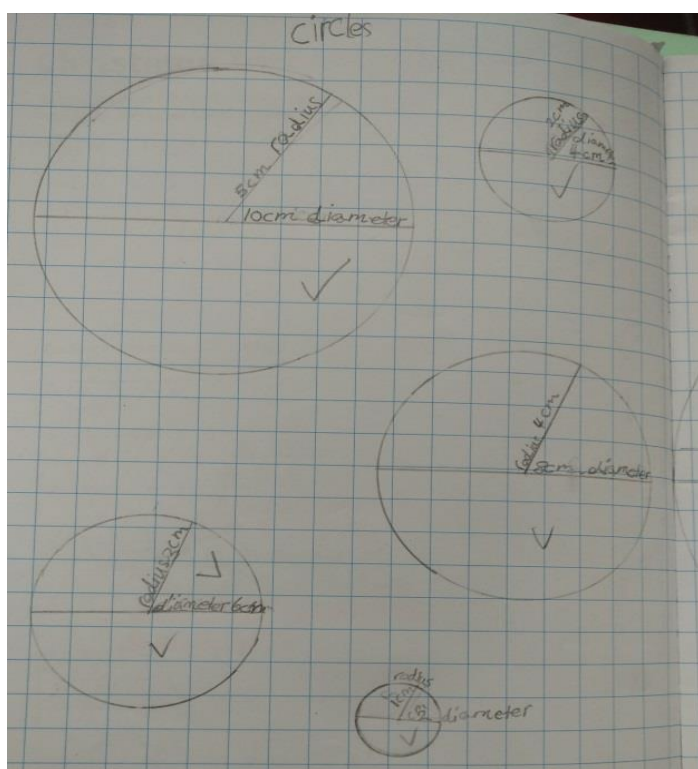
Look at the grid below. Your job is to create a ‘magic square’ . In a magic square each row, column and diagonal add up to the same total. You may use the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 - one number per box. You may only use each number once.

A note as a 'mum' on this one – I gave this challenge to my own children at a restaurant where they allow children to scribble on the paper table cloth. In about half an hour, the table was covered in equations and apart from pleadings to let them out of their misery (which I ignored) , I had a lovely quiet half hour with a cup of tea!

Here are a few examples of work from around the school:

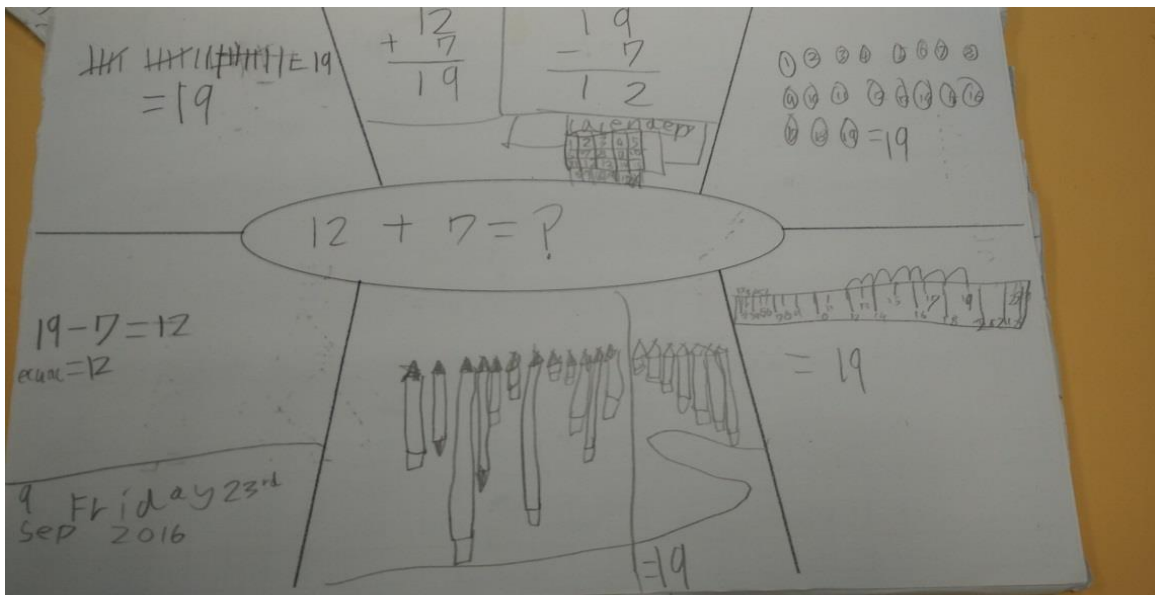


In this activity, students have created their own way to solve a division problem. They have shared their strategies with the class. Teaching this way ensures that children actually understand what is happening with division. Examining strategies from other children widens their repertoire and deepens their understanding.



Children here are preparing for some integrated mathematics where they will analyse the geometric artwork of Sophie Taeuber Arp and create their own art work in her style. In order to do this, they need to understand the relationship between radius and diameter and use measuring equipment accurately.

In this work, children have to show different ways of representing $12 + 7$. Children who have rote learned this fact without understanding find this challenging. This student was fine!



As always, if you have any questions about teaching and learning at JIS, please do not hesitate to contact me at c-wan@jis.edu.hk

Dates for the diary – next week – Week 2 - January 9th – 13th

JIS Student Council will be launching our Chinese New Year appeals for donations of food, clothes, toys and books for the ESSPA sale.

Monday 9th – P3/4 arts and drama workshops - morning

Tuesday 10th – Student Council meeting at lunchtime with Mr Appleton and Mr Walton

Wednesday 11th – Reception Class journeys and transport trip – TST and Central – all day

-Art workshops for P3 and P4 classes with Don Choi, local artist

Thursday 12th – ICHK BoD Meeting – Mr Walton to represent JIS

Friday 13th –

Wishing everyone a very enjoyable weekend and week ahead.

Simon Walton

ICHK update:

I attach the link to this week's ICHK Secondary email bulleting from Toby Newton, Head of School. He includes some interesting recognition for the work the school is currently doing on curriculum innovation with their staff and students.

[ICHK Bulletin week 1 term 2](#)