



Christ Church Hanham C of E VC Primary School

Nurture with love ~ Grow through knowledge and wisdom ~ Flourish in hope

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Tuesday 5th March 2024

Numbots and Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) Update

Dear Families,

I am quietly confident that a **buzz** around maths has arrived in your home since returning from the Christmas break back in January. From EYFS right up to Year 6, we have reintroduced, reignited and reinvigorated the joy that is recalling maths facts. Through Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) and Numbots, the children have access to a platform (depending on age and year group) which is designed to provide opportunity, at home, to recall key mathematical knowledge. The platforms are intuitively designed, child-centred and make recalling number facts fun and addictive.

I am writing to share the following date for your diaries:

Battle of the Bands Dressing Up Day - Friday 22nd March 2024

Children and staff from every year group will be invited to come to school on this day dressed up as their favourite rock/pop star, a singer, a group or just in clothes which express themselves and their musical or non-musical background.

TTRS battle in the run up to Battle of the Bands day

Friday 15th March 4pm will see the beginning of a KS2 TTRS battle where every class from Year 3 to Year 6 will be vying for the crown of CCH Class Champion. The battle will close at 8pm on Thursday 21st March at 8pm (the day before the Battle of the Bands Day).



Why are there no inter-class battles for younger mathematicians using Numbots (EYFS to Year 2)?

The emphasis in NumBots is on self-improvement and understanding the mathematical concepts. Compared to Times Tables Rock Stars, there's a lower priority given to speed of responses (though it's still important in NumBots) and the idea of racing against other children goes against that.

Why put such importance on recall?

Times Tables Rock Stars is a fun and engaging way to help primary school children improve their mathematical skills, particularly in the area of multiplication tables. The program takes a multi-sensory approach to tuition, using music and game-like features to help students memorize and recall multiplication tables more effectively.



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Why TTRS?

TTRS uses a multi-sensory approach to repetition learning, helping learners to memorise and recall multiplication tables and other mathematical skills. This approach, combined with retrieval practice, helps to reinforce learning and improve memory retention. The flexible approach of TTRS also allows for differentiation and personalised learning, adapting to each student's unique learning needs.

Furthermore, TTRS offers a range of accessibility features, such as adjustable speed settings and font sizes, making it an inclusive tool for all learners.

TTRS and Numbots guides

To support the enjoyment of TTRS and Numbots at home or on the go, I have included two sources of information for each platform: a video guide for each and parent/carer guides (produced by the Maths Circle team) which can be found at the end of this letter.

TTRS Video guide

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ZxZbRVvbYM>

Numbots video guide for parents and carers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24sggVgwBOg>

Numbots video guide for children

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

Yours faithfully,

Gareth Thomas

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Parent and carer Guide (page 1 of 2)

What are the different Game Modes?

Single Player

Jamming

4 or 8 coins/correct answer

The only game mode without a timer, players chose the table and operation ($\times$ or $\div$ or both) they want to practise. Answer 10, 20 or 30 questions.

Gig

10 coins per correct answer

Gig games last 5 minutes and contain up to 100 questions, which come in 'waves', starting with the 10s, then the 2s, 5s, 3s, 4s, 8s, 6s, 7s, 9s, 11s and 12s. Novices are not expected to get past the 5s.

Gigs provide the child (and their teacher) with a simple measure of their current skills, which is why learners should concentrate fully for the whole Gig as they won't get another try until next month.

Garage

10 coins per correct answer

Players are given a personalised set of 6 multiplication questions (and their matching division questions) in each round. The questions they get keep adjusting to provide the best fit for every learner's needs. This is probably the best game made for improving their recall while they're still learning.

Studio

1 coin per correct answer

Here your child earns their Rock Status, which is based on their Studio Speed. The faster they are the better their status. Studio Speed is the average of their most recent 10 Studio games. Suitable for confident players.

Soundcheck

5 coins per correct answer

Soundcheck games ask 25 multiplication questions (up to 12×12), allowing 6 seconds for each question. Suitable for confident players.

Multi Player

Festival

1 coin per correct answer

Children compete against others from around the world, with their identities protected behind their rock names. Suitable for confident players.

Arena

1 coin per correct answer

Children race against other members of their class who are logged in and choose the same arena name at the same time. Arena games use the same smart question algorithm as Garage games.

Rock Slam

1 coin per correct answer

Players challenge their classmates or teachers to answer as many questions as they can in 60 seconds, setting a score for the challengee to beat. Pupils don't need to be online at the same time.

Tournaments

Battle of the Bands – groups of children within the same school (usually classes, year groups or teams) compete to have the highest *average* score per player.

Top of the Rocks – like a Battle of the Bands *between* schools. The winning class or school is the one with the most correct answers per person.

Important: Each correct answer (in any game mode) earns 1 point towards the team's total in addition to the coins earned. For example, in Garage games each correct answer is worth 1 point for the team and 10 coins for the player.

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Troubleshooting

My child's coins and/or Studio speed have suddenly dropped	Another child may have logged in as your child. Please reassure your child that this can be rectified. Contact their teacher who can set a new password, refund any coins, delete Studio games and talk to the class about online safety.
My child plays too much	Set firm TTRS time limits; reward healthy choices; take away devices before bed.
My child's name is showing on a school leader board.	Please ask your child's teacher to change the settings at their end so that rock names show on the leaderboards instead of real names.
What does the  mean?	If this symbol appears over a game tile (e.g. over Garage) it means the teacher has set your child a certain number of minutes to practise in that game mode for homework. Once they complete those minutes the other games unlock.

Learners with different access arrangements

How can I hide the timer?	Start a game and press  > Hide Practice Clock. You could also play a game in Jamming.
How can I increase the length of Garage games?	Single player > Garage > press the little arrow below "play solo" > choose 1, 2 or 3 minutes.
The tables are too hard	Make sure your child is playing in Garage or Arena game modes. If this does not resolve the issue, please speak to your child's teacher. Remember that Jamming mode allows the child to choose the tables themselves.
My child gets anxious	Try the three above plus: setting mini goals (e.g. complete 2 minutes today, get 1 more point in the next game, pass 1 level); having a break from online play (come back in a couple of days); and reminding them of Baz's words: "A good rock star stays chillaxed by accepting they make mistakes."
My child has visual impairments; what settings are available?	Head to the Profile page where you can: change the colour scheme; reduce the visual stimuli with Declutter mode; increase the font size or switch to a dyslexia-friendly font called Lexie. play.ttrockstars.com is also screen reader compatible.
Can I turn off division?	Yes in Jamming mode but not in the other games. The reason for that is that practising multiplication and division at the same time supports the recall of both and is the most successful approach. If your child is finding division confusing, please speak to their teacher about starting with the 10s only and for advice on how to help at home.



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ABOUT NUMBOTS

What is NumBots?

NumBots is an online maths learning platform that helps children learn how to add and subtract, improving their fluency and recall in basic mental maths, and equipping them with maths confidence.

Why is NumBots important?

Basic number skills are the essential building blocks for higher-level maths concepts. NumBots covers number recognition, number bonds, and addition and subtraction of double digit numbers; gradually helping your child to build a solid conceptual understanding of number sense.

How often should my child play?

We recommend a little and often approach; 3 minutes practice a day, 4 times a week is a good target.

LOGGING IN

What is my child's username and password?

Your child's teacher will provide a unique username and password (or picture pin). Please encourage your child not to share their password with others.

How does my child log in?

Log in to NumBots on a browser at play.numbots.com and select Schools > Pupils > enter the school name or postcode. Select the correct school and then enter their username and password/pin details.

Is there an App?

Yes, there is an app for Amazon, Android and Apple devices. Please go to the relevant app store to download the app for free.

HOW THE GAME WORKS

Who is Rusty?

Rusty is the central character of NumBots who needs help in his quest to find new parts to upgrade himself to a shiny diamond bot. Children progress through the game, unlocking levels and upgrading Rusty as they go.

How does my child accessorise their Bot Avatar?

When your child first logs in they will be able to choose a Bot Name and Bot Avatar. Coins earned by answering maths questions correctly can be spent in the Custom Shack on new parts to personalise their own robot.

What is Story Mode?

Story Mode consists of 18 stages, each containing numerous levels which players must pass to unlock the next, focusing on conceptual understanding of core maths. Using a variety of visual representations, Story Mode introduces different calculation strategies in a carefully sequenced order.

What is Challenge Mode?

Challenge Mode consists of rapid responses to essential maths facts against the clock. Each of the 30 challenges focuses on a key skill or objective, and each game lasts 1 minute. Unlike Story Mode, all of the challenges are available to play as soon as Challenge Mode is unlocked.

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My child's coins have suddenly dropped	Another child may have logged in as your child. Please reassure your child that this can be rectified. Contact their teacher who can set a new password, refund any coins and talk to the class about online safety.
My child has forgotten their login details	Please contact your child's teacher for a reminder, as the NumBots team are unable to provide login details to parents for data protection reasons.
My child finds it too easy	We encourage all pupils to start at the very beginning of Story Mode, even those with strong maths skills, as they can progress through the early levels quickly which will help reaffirm the basics and make connections with the more difficult questions. You can speak to their teacher who can skip the first topics if needed.
How can I tell if my child has completed their Activity Goal set by the teacher?	When logged in, your child will be able to see how many minutes they have left remaining to reach their weekly goal in Game Data on the Game Modes screen. Once they have achieved their weekly Activity Goal, an animation of an arrow hitting a target will appear on their screen.
Is NumBots safe?	Yes. There are no adverts, no in-app purchases nor any chat functions. See more in our Privacy Notice (https://numbots.com/privacy-notice/).

LEARNERS WITH DIFFERENT NEEDS

The questions are too hard	Encourage your child to be resilient and try each question a number of times. They are not expected to pass the level first time! They can also press the "i" icon for further instructions if they are stuck. If they are still struggling, please speak to your child's teacher.
My child is unable to pass a level	To earn the 2 or 3 stars required to pass a level, children must be both accurate and timely with their answers. If your child is getting 0 or 1 stars, they need to answer more quickly. This is deliberate, as it ensures that they have the number fluency required to move on to the next level. If your child cannot progress any further, we suggest going back to previous levels where they scored 2 stars and trying to score 3 stars on them all. Once completed with 3 stars, they should be fluent enough to pass the current level they're stuck on. If your child still needs more time to answer the questions, speak to their teacher about relaxing the time constraints in the accessibility settings.
My child gets anxious playing in Challenge Mode	The timer can be hidden in Challenge Mode via the settings. Press ⚙️ and ensure the "Show Timer" toggle is switched off.
My child has visual impairments; what settings are available?	Head to settings (press ⚙️) where the colour scheme can be changed to high contrast colour settings, which also helps to reduce the visual stimuli and declutter the screen. Children can also press the speaker icon next to each question for it to be read out loud.