

Learning and the Brain

Topic 3: Myths about Mathematics

"I'm just not a Maths person!"



This is a common statement that teachers hear all the time, not only from students but also from parents. It is a damaging statement that can build and or support a *Fixed Mathematical Mindset* in our children. Many people think they are either born with or without maths ability, something they essentially cannot change. **This is just not true!**

Maths just happens to be the subject that people think it is ok to admit they are bad at. Why is this? I've never been in a conversation where people laugh and joke about 'being bad at reading'. Then why is it OK for us to say it about maths and especially in front of our children?

If you have read the two previous newsletter articles about 'Growth/Fixed Mindsets' and 'How the Brain Learns', you will remember the importance of self-belief and effort and mistakes in learning. If we possess a growth mindset we are more likely to learn, especially in maths.

By saying to our children, I'm not just a maths person, are we giving our children 'permission' to accept that they too are just not a maths person? They don't need to try because it's just something they're not good at?

Other maths myths and misconceptions that are proven to be **FALSE**:

- You have to be very intelligent to be good at maths
- It is acceptable to be bad at maths because most people are
- Maths isn't really used much outside of special occupations
- If you are faster you are at maths, the smarter you are
- Maths is about a right or wrong answer and there is only one way to solve a problem
- Maths is about following procedures

So next time you are finding it challenging working out an everyday maths problem, admit it proudly to your child and then talk about and demonstrate how you might go about solving it!

Be a Growth Mindset Role Model! Everyone can be a 'Maths Person'!