



SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING MATH SKILLS

Mathematics is an anytime, all-the-time activity that encompasses every part of life. It is an integral part of grocery shopping, bill-paying, building a model airplane, decorating a room, baking cookies, or just getting to school on time. As a result, it is important that we, as parents or caretakers, work diligently to help guide our children toward a deeper understanding of and appreciation for mathematical skills and applications.

There are many strategies that we can use to help develop that passion in our young mathematicians.

1. Ask your child to teach you what they learned in math class. “Playing teacher” requires them to focus on the details of the concepts they are learning. It also allows you to identify flaws in their thinking, which may be posing a challenge to their learning.
2. Volunteer to work with the math class, so that you can gain an understanding of the strategies they are being taught. This is also a great opportunity to help children who are behind to catch up, allowing the teacher to continue moving forward.
3. Have your child correct missed problems on classwork/homework and tests that are returned by the teacher. Ideally, homework should be checked before it is turned in.
4. Make up additional math problems that are similar to what is being brought home to help reinforce the math concepts. Other resources that provide support include math workbooks and online worksheets from sites such as mathfactcafe.com and softschools.com.
5. Download math apps and software to and bookmark websites on portable devices such as tablets, phones, iPods, and laptops that children can explore every time they are on the go.
6. Read fun, level-appropriate books about math-related characters and plots. Ask follow up math questions to gauge their comprehension.
7. Make every set of numbers a math game. While in the car, have children quickly add up numbers to get sums (or multiply to get products) off of passing license plates, billboards, houses, the car’s digital clock, and road signs.
8. Teach children about money through:
 - a. chores and allowances (include percentages for spending, charity and savings),
 - b. grocery shopping trips that include a budget and comparison shopping prices,
 - c. performing additional tasks to save money for specific things they want,
 - d. watching the counter as the gas tank fills and paying in cash at the register,

- e. rolling coins and cashing them in or depositing them at the bank,
 - f. providing a dollar limit that can be spent when ordering at a restaurant,
 - g. a pre-set budget for the season's school clothes and allowing them to make choices,
 - h. the use of coupons at grocery stores, restaurants, and clothing stores,
 - i. shopping sales and determining discounted prices,
 - j. a personal monthly budget for which they are responsible, that includes expenses such as: cell phone charges, dining/food (eating out, concessions, lunches), clothing/shoes, toiletries, entertainment, and school purchases, and
 - k. allowing them to be the banker/real estate broker during a game of Monopoly.
9. Teach children about measurements through:
- a. cooking and baking together,
 - b. sewing lessons,
 - c. building/woodworking,
 - d. measuring food and drinks as they serve themselves,
 - e. estimating how many gallons of gas will be needed to fill the car up,
 - f. estimating the weight/length of items in the house, then measuring them, and
 - g. stating what unit of measurement would be used to find the weight/length of various objects that you pass while driving.
10. Teach children about time through:
- a. together establishing a daily schedule of their activities including times they occur and how long each should take. Activities can include, time to wake, meals, chores, school, homework, extracurricular activities, reading time, free time, and bedtime routine. Have them live with the schedule for a day, then revise for accuracy,
 - b. having them wear an analog watch and quizzing them on the current time throughout the day. You can even have them mentally note key times, such as when traffic begins to get heavy, when it starts to get dark outside, how long it takes to get home from the store, and how long it takes to eat dinner, and
 - c. solving verbal word problems in the car, such as, "We should arrive at the field in 13 minutes. What time will it be?" Have them analyze the final result to determine what time you actually arrived and how long it took.
11. Host study sessions in your home before tests or after the introduction of new concepts.
12. Schedule a time and provide a quiet environment for daily math work, regardless of if the teacher has given homework or not. Review with your child the progress that is being made.
13. Refrain from sharing reservations that you have about math with your child. Instead, find help through online lessons; off-load the homework review to the other parent (in turn, taking on more familiar subjects); or enlist a tutor (teacher, older sibling, peer student).

If you have any questions or interest in advanced learning, please contact Jenny Coronado, Advanced Academics Specialist for the Education Village at jcoronad@ccisd.net.

HAPPY COMPUTING, MOSSMAN KNIGHTS!