

Top 10 Tips for Teaching Elementary Math

For many students, math can create an abundance of hidden anxieties. Many children will dismiss math as "stupid" if they have any difficulty or frustration with the topics. As a parent or a teacher, you may find it hard to motivate students to complete math worksheets. Here are some tips to help your students tackle math and overcome anxieties.

1. Keep a positive attitude.

Many parents and teachers are anxious about math themselves, either because they are unsure of how to teach it properly or because they themselves were poor math students. Children can pick up on these emotions easily, so keep your tone and your attitude positive.

2. Make sure the child understands the assignment.

For homework or classroom printable worksheets, if you see students struggling, ask them to explain what the assignment is or how they should complete the particular problem. You should be able to gauge by the response whether or not they fully understand, or if they need further assistance and explanation. Parents may want to look over homeschool worksheets to make sure that the assignments are being done correctly.

3. Explore math in your day to day routines.

Elementary school children are well aware of their daily routines, and it is easy to incorporate math into their everyday lives. For example, you can use the minutes left on the clock until lunchtime as an exercise for subtraction, or multiplying the number of boys and girls in the class.

4. Explain math as a way to solve problems.

While math does utilize the methods of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, it is also so much more than these concepts. It can be used to solve problems. Explain to your child how math works to solve different problems, such as knowing how many pieces of cake you need to cut. Go beyond printable worksheets and explore likenesses and differences in your daily routine. This will demonstrate the value of math in their every day lives.

5. Get the kids talking.

Ask your child to complete math problems by talking through the steps. This will allow you to see exactly where his or her train of thought is and where there might be confusion. 6. Teach money skills Even young kids understand that things cost money. By getting them a piggy bank, you can use money as a way to teach counting, addition, and subtraction skills. Older kids can even use fractions and percentages when trying to determine how much money they have saved up towards a desired item. For example, if a movie they want costs \$20, and they have saved up \$8, they have saved up $\frac{2}{5}$ of the amount, or 40%.

7. Teach time.

Both digital and analog clocks can be useful tools for teaching your child time. Discuss seconds, minutes, hours, and days.

8. Make math fun.

You can combine teacher worksheets with games to make math more interesting. Play games with flash cards that use different math skills as a way to help your student practice.

9. Computers make useful tools.

Today's students are much more comfortable and confident on the computer than their parents were at the same age. There are a variety of computer games that incorporate math skills. Older students may be excited about spreadsheets or calendars as a way to practice math.

10. Parents and teachers should maintain communication.

Teaching math relies on both the teacher and the parents to help the students learn the skills that they need. By keeping clear communication about the types and frequency of homework assignments, teachers can help identify problems early, working together with parents to solve the issues.