

9 Fun ways to help Preschool Children learn Math

by Steffen Carter - Tuesday, September 10, 2019

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Mathematics is generally regarded as a subject which is fun and it's equally challenging to deal with. For some students this element of being challenging gives excitement and joy, while for others, it causes fear and anxiety. Approaching Mathematics with enthusiasm is very important and this may not be practically possible for everyone since not all students have the innate quality to perform well in math or even be able to like it as a subject for that matter. The fear of math may start from a young age if students are not given proper attention and guidance. Hence, it is essential to introduce and teach math in as many fun ways as possible from a tender age. At the stage of Preschool, children still do not have much idea of what mathematics is about and their mind is still fresh and open to internalize anything and everything that's being taught to them.

Roughly

preschoolers are of the age of around 2 to 3 years old and at this stage, there

will be rapid development of motor skills

children innately observe their surroundings and react according to their reflexes. Children constantly experiment by meddling with the objects around them, which means they are learning through trial and error. Having understood how children of this age function,

introducing math and sparking an interest in them should be done in a way that they can understand and conceive the ideas and information.

Kids like to meddle with things that are of different shapes and sizes, of different colours and textures and using this specific preference, [tutor](#) should introduce mathematics in a gradual and subtle manner without going too fast into it as a subject. Everything big and complex has to have a small starting point and hence it is important to give a subtle beginning to the journey of mathematics for kids without inducing fear at the starting point itself.

So,

here are 9 ways mathematics can be introduced to children...

#1:

INTRODUCING THE DISCIPLINES OF MATHEMATICS

The main areas of mathematics are number sense, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis. These seem complicated and tough to introduce to pre-schoolers who barely know how to speak with complete sentences. For pre-schoolers, these complicated categories look at little things like this,

(A) Counting, number identity, addition and subtraction (**number sense**)

(B) Patterns, comparing and sorting (**algebra**)

(C) Shape identification, shape differentiation (**geometry**)

(D) Comparing sizes, lengths and weights (**measurement**)

(E) Graphing, simple estimation (**data analysis**)

These are the general ways in which the disciplines of mathematics can be taught to children but it can't be done through verbal teaching because children don't have the attention span, or the patience to sit at one place to learn these things. This has to be handled in a fun way, especially through fun games and activities.

#2: PAPER BASKETBALL

In order to teach children how to count, instead of making them read a book that has numbers in them listed out, you can make it much more engaging by teaching them how to count while tossing paper balls into a basket. Some related hands-on activities will always ensure that the concept being taught is well-registered in children's mind.

Apart from this, counting is a concept that can be taught through daily activities as well. For example, we [can instruct children to count till twenty](#) as they [wash their hands](#) before snack time. They can count how many plates, bowls, napkins and cups are needed during lunch time too. This way, completing their daily routines will not be boring and its educational as well. Children have a natural propensity towards counting (without themselves knowing it consciously) and organising, hence, the basic foundation of math is through handling objects and counting them.

#3: SUGAR CUBE BUILDING

This is a good way to introduce shapes and sizes. The usual squares and triangles are easy to comprehend but the more complicated shapes (for pre-schoolers) like prisms, pyramids and cubes cannot be easily understood and hence they need to be able to visualise what it looks like. 3-year-olds may not be able to remember the terms but the shapes will most definitely be registered in their minds. Hence building different 3-dimensional structures out of small items like sugar cubes will be a good way to teach geometry to children in an engaging way.

#4: COLOUR SORTING

Being

able to differentiate between an X and Y is necessary in order to solve mathematical problem sums in examinations in classes beyond pre-school. This starts from children being able to associate the elements that are related and set aside the ones that are not. Giving children colored printable and colored cotton balls or whatsoever of that sort to match and paste them to create some art work will be an interesting way to get children to be trained for coordination and association.

#5: NUMBER TRACING

By

getting children to trace out number patterns, and that too with paint or sketch pens will keep things interesting and the slow action of tracing out the numbers will ensure that the patterns are well-registered in their minds. This way children will never get confused and remember the exact pattern for each number. Sometimes children may have problems differentiating numbers like 12 and 21 and may not understand the order of which comes first and which comes next. Hence, it is essential for tutors to guide them and explain the difference to help them avoid confusion. If the misunderstanding sticks with them for a prolonged period of time, it will affect them when they enter kindergarten where they have to start to learn how to do simple math sums like addition and subtraction. Laying a strong foundation is crucial to excel in math.

#6: MEASUREMENTS

To

be able to measure one object using another object as a unit is a skill that children need to master. It may seem like something very

small but one of the core skills of mathematics is to be able to handle different units of measurements and different representations of a number in different contexts. It gets much more complicated and abstract in classes beyond primary school but the starting point is from pre-school.

#7: GRAPHS

Graphs

of all forms (bar charts, Venn diagrams, line graphs) will be something that children would see a lot in their future classes and it will be intimidating for them if it's being introduced out of the blue. Everything needs time and children need to tune in to the habit of looking at graphs and learning how to analyse them.

#8:

ROLL THE DICES

A

great way to get children to count and cultivate the habit of tabulating scores with speed and accuracy can be done through dices. For pre-schoolers, tabulating scores may be a little challenging and ahead for their age, however, writing down the numbers (which appear on the dice), on a piece of paper will be a good form of practice to warm up to numbers.

#9: NUMBER SONGS

An amazingly effective and enjoyable way to teach children numbers is through songs. Information conveyed through music will get registered in minds rapidly and it is difficult to forget. Children will hum the songs throughout the day and that itself is a great form of practice to get used to numbers and handle them with ease in math questions.

BOTTOM LINE

There are so many fun ways to learn math and the list is endless. Pre-schoolers are of a tender age and their minds are open to absorb everything that is being taught to them. Teaching mathematics in a fun and engaging manner will ensure that children have an interest in math from the beginning and it prevents them from getting intimidated by numbers.

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