



MATH AND THE REAL WORLD

Parents can help children understand math concepts as well as how math is used as part of our everyday life.

Children need to:

- explore and talk about math using real objects.
- practice math in fun ways.
- understand that there can be many ways to solve a problem and that math is useful and important.
- become confident that they are good problem solvers and mathematicians.

Use the following suggestions to show your child math in the real world:

On trips (including trips around town)

- Ask your children to point out different shapes of signs (squares, rectangles, triangles, hexagons). Which shapes did they see most often? Least often?
- Have them figure out how much longer it will take to get there
- Have them figure out how long it will take to get there if you drive 50 miles per hour instead of 70 miles per hour.

Games

- Find or make games that use mathematics skills. Cards, dominoes, board games such as checkers or chess, and computer games encourage mathematical thinking as well as reasoning.
- Develop a secret code (where numbers substitute for letters) with your child and then write notes to each other using that code.

Newspaper

Find mathematics in your local newspaper.

- Read the newspaper with your child and discuss all the mathematics used – from opinion polls, baseball batting averages, and grocery prices to classified ads.
- Discuss charts and graphs in the newspaper. Ask what they mean and how they add to a story.

Grocery Stores

Use consumer math.

- When you go to the grocery store with your child, keep a running total of how much the groceries will cost.
- Have your child estimate the number of apples (or grapes or cherries) it takes to make a pound.
- Compare prices of items, including price per ounce, to calculate which size package is the better value.