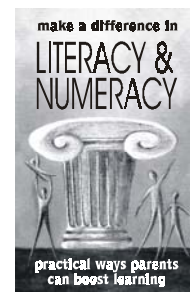


Explore math through children's literature

For students in primary grades



You already know how important it is to spend time reading and working on math with your child. Finding math in children's literature allows you to help your child develop important skills in both math and language at the same time.

Here are some of the benefits:

- Math becomes a part of your bedtime routine
- Your child will learn important math language
- Children who love math may become more interested in reading
- Children who love reading may become more interested in math
- Math becomes part of your life
- You can make math and reading fun

Find the math in your child's favourite books

Sometimes the math is obvious. Counting and shape books are easy ways to introduce math at story time. Interesting illustrations capture children's imagination and open the door to a variety of activities.

Books such as *Ten in the Bed* or *Over in the Meadow* encourage him to start counting. Find a pile of something for your child to count – books on a shelf, toys in a box, pennies in a jar, cans on a shelf. Let your child count her own way. This might be by ones, twos, fives or tens.

Read *The Shape of Things* by Dayle Ann Dodds or *The Greedy Triangle* by Marilyn Burns with your child and then go on a shape hunt. Have your child look for as many two-dimensional (squares, circles) and three-dimensional (cubes, spheres) shapes as he can find.

Songs, poems and chants that relate to mathematics are another enjoyable way to find the math in language. You remember *One, Two, Buckle My Shoe* and *The Ants Go Marching One by One*. They may be brand new to your child.

Look for patterns in songs and books. Many repeat lines or passages in predictable ways, allowing children to recognize and predict the patterns. *Mortimer* by Robert Munsch and *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see* by Eric Carle are examples of this type of patterning.

Other books provide less obvious, but wonderful math connections. Look for books where the characters measure, count, use money, estimate and solve a variety of problems.

In Ludwig Bemelmans' *Madeleine* series, the concepts of skip counting by two and early multiplication could be discussed, as the girls go for a walk, marching two by two.

You could discuss measurement after reading *Big or Little* by Kathy Stinson or *Sadie and the Snowman* by Allen Morgan.

Cooking with your child is another great way to develop your child's math skills. In books such as *Grandma and the Pirates* by Phoebe Gilman and *Road-maker's Munch* by Josephine Croser, recipes are provided at the end of the story.

Find the problems

When a character comes upon a math problem in a book, stop before the character solves the problem and discuss with your child how he would solve it. Then read on to discover what the character does.

While your child is trying to solve a problem, ask her what she is thinking. Have her act it out or draw about it. This will help her make sense of it. Remember errors are an opportunity to learn something new.

This tip sheet was prepared by Kristi Manuel and Catherine Roper, Program Implementation Resource Teachers.