



RIGHTSTART™
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by Activities for Learning, Inc.

MATHEMATICS

RightStartMath.com

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You want a good, comprehensive math program for your children: one that is easy to teach and one that gives the children the foundation they need for everyday living and for studying science in our technological world. You want your children to have a solid understanding and love for math.

This research-based RightStart™ Mathematics program, used by thousands of children worldwide, is easy to use. The lessons tell you what to teach, together with the how and why, day by day and year by year.

“What Makes This Math Program Different?”

This unique program uses visualization of quantities, de-emphasizes counting, and provides strategies (visual pictures) for learning the facts. The primary learning tool is the AL Abacus, a specially designed two-sided abacus that is both hands-on and visual.

To appreciate visualization, try to imagine eight apples in a line without grouping them--virtually impossible. Next, imagine five of those apples as red and three as green. Now you can see them. The children learn to use these mental models for doing arithmetic.

For young children, counting is inaccurate and inefficient and ignores place value. However, grouping quantities in fives and tens makes it possible to recognize quantities without counting and to see them mentally. Look at the figures below. Without counting or grouping, can you tell how many blocks are in the left figure? How many in the right figure?



Understanding is stressed. Math needs to be taught so 95% is understood and only 5% memorized. When children understand, they need to spend less time on review and practice. Rote memorizing is high maintenance; it requires constant review. And those merely memorizing math usually can't apply it and generally dislike it.

Place value is introduced early. The Place Value Cards help children learn how to construct numbers and to read them in the normal order from left to right. To understand the pattern that ten 1s is 10, ten 10s is 100, and ten 100s is 1000, the child must work with 4-digit numbers. Stopping at 99, as does traditional math, prevents children from seeing the pattern.

“Why the AL Abacus?”

We know that children learn best when they can handle objects and think about the inherent patterns. The AL Abacus has 100 beads grouped in fives by color and grouped in tens by rows. When two quantities are added, the sum is apparent: no further counting is necessary.

The AL Abacus is much simpler to use than the Japanese or Chinese abacus. Children were about 8 years old before learning the Asian manual calculator, but 4-year-olds can learn on the AL Abacus. (The Japanese national curriculum discontinued teaching the abacus in 1996.)

The AL Abacus also provides visual pictures to help the children master the facts. Children enjoy using the AL Abacus, but it doesn't become a crutch. When 5-year-old Stan was asked, “How much is $11 + 6$?” He said 17. He was asked how he knew. He replied, “I've got the abacus in my mind.”

Our Mission: To help children understand, apply, and enjoy mathematics.