Math Newsletter

Sept 2022

Email: smitc01@cttcs.ca
Ph: 306-783-8787
Cell: 306-621-2248

Happy New Year!

I'm sure you've heard "Welcome Back" a thousand times! I always think of this as a "New Year" celebration. The great thing about teaching is we get a new beginning every year—new students (usually), another chance to stick to our promises to ourselves (I was always telling myself I would stay on top of classroom disruptions more consistently and keep the class calendar more diligently, etc), and a time to try new things or improve on old ones. So, as you start fresh this fall, I wish you a year of great student relationships and meaningful self-care. These are priorities, and the rest will follow!

Start Math Class off Right!!

Here are some great tips from Kyle Pearce and Jon Orr (Make Math Moments Matter)

CHANGE THEIR BELIEFS ABOUT MATH

A big part of building that sense of support for your students is about surveying their beliefs and working to change any negative idea they might have connected to math or their own ability.

If they're holding onto a damaging belief, such as, "I'm not good at math," it will be really hard to get through to them no matter what you do.

But if you can start the year off with an activity that helps them start to break that misbelief, as well as letting them know that you understand how they feel, you not only start building that sense of trust and support but you can inspire them to want to learn more in the process.

MORE GREAT TASKS FOR INSPIRING CURIOSITY

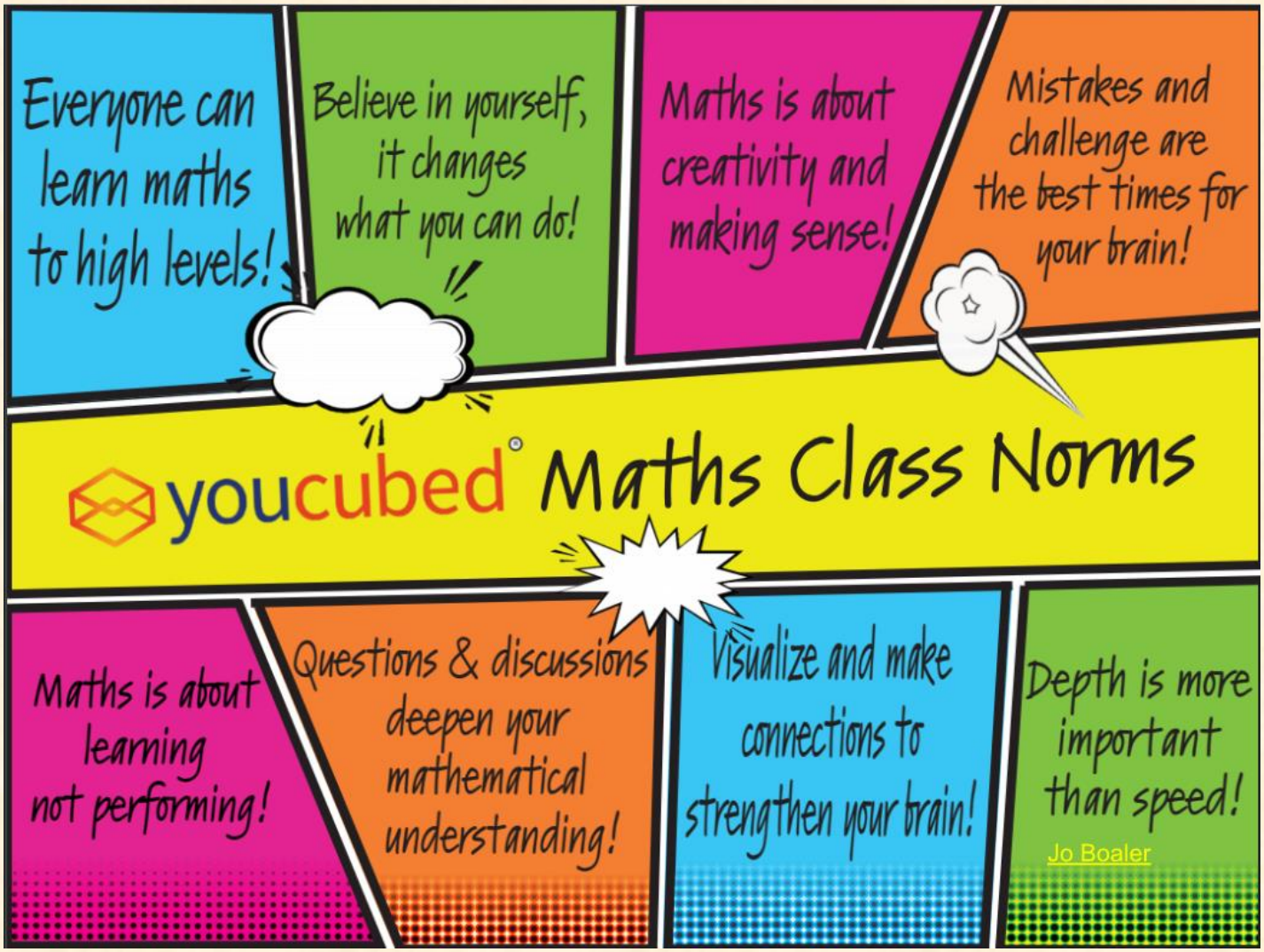
Here are a few more tasks that are great for inspiring curiosity in your students:

- **R2D2**: This task helps set norms for the classroom such as inclusivity while sparking curiosity. **Learn more about this 3-act math task**.
- **Noah's Ark**: A visual task that gets students collaborating by asking them to balance out each side of the ark. **Printout available here**.

More resources for curiosity-inducing tasks:

- **Jo Boaler's Week of Inspirational Math**
- **Peter Liljedahl's good tasks**

[Click Here](#) to Download the whole Guidebook **"How to Start the School Year off Right"** which contains tips and a great wealth of resources, starter games, conversation ideas, etc.



The week of Inspirational Maths (WIM) resources are free lessons and videos about math and mindset designed to inspire students. They are ideal for the first week of school, to get students excited about the year ahead, but can be used any time! Click here


Strategies for Learning Mathematics


Brains Grow and Change


The Importance of Struggle


Fibonacci Sequence

Cool Reads: Reinforcing Elementary Math Lessons with Movement
Five Indispensable Ways to Deepen Student Learning
Icebreakers for Math Class Relationship Building from Day One
Six Ways to Get to Know your Students and Build a Classroom Community
Four Proactive Steps to Avoid Misbehaviour from the First Day of Class On
You Only get One First Day of School

From the Math Consultant's Desk

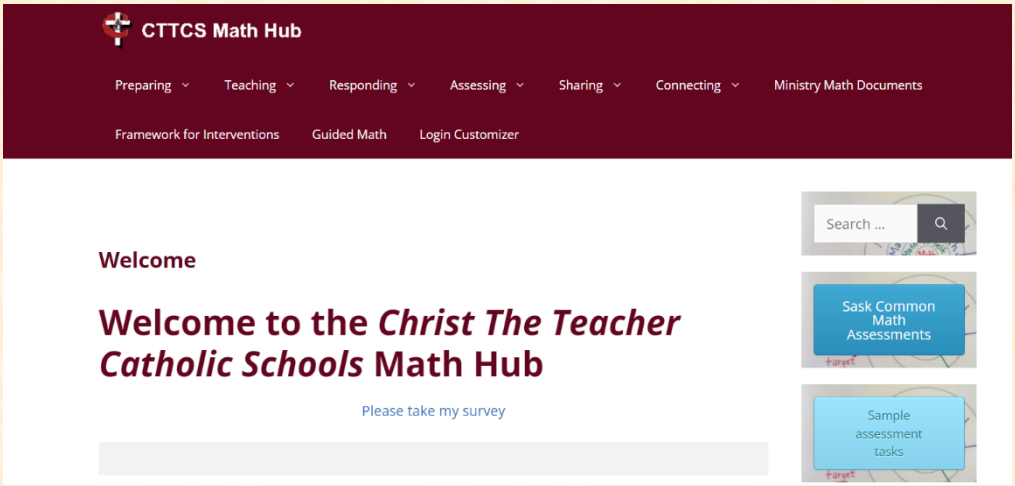
1. Screeners will be ready by end of next week. Our goal is to give them full group somewhere in the last 2 weeks of Sept/First week of Oct. Remember, this is our first run at these! You're going to find errors and question items that are less than perfect. Just jot these things down and I'll continue to improve them.

   More info to follow

2. Math UP trial licenses are over. Your school can purchase an actual license for about $700, but that is a "forever" license (no annual renewal fee), I can transfer the license among teachers, and you get access to every grade! This is great value! Math UP has excellent games and activities with each outcome—some printable to play with a partner or group, some digital to play on a computer—to support your guided math.

   We are also exploring "Mathology". More information to follow.

3. There are good resources collected on our CTTCS Math Hub. This is an ever-evolving resource for our math teachers.



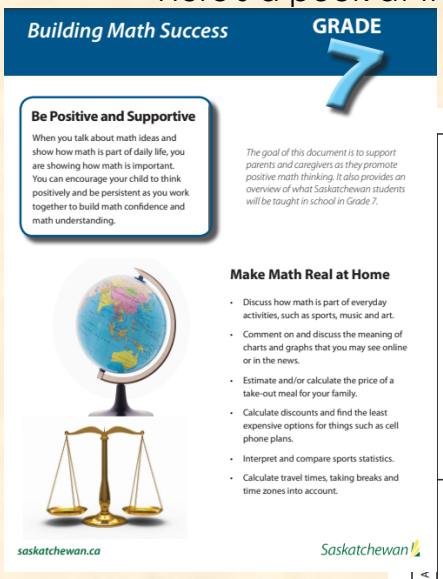
   https://christtheteacher.ca/ctt/cttcsmathhub/

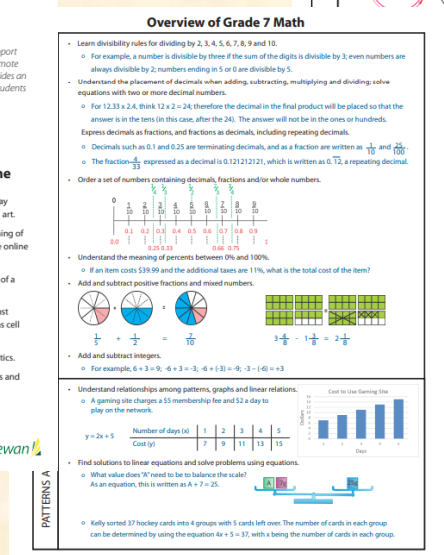
Check out the resources under "Guided Math", "Technology for Learning" , and "Triangulating Assessment Evidence".

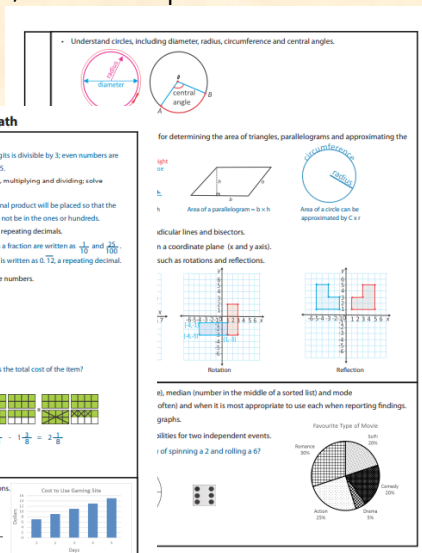
4. October 11—Guided Math Day! We will set up a Guided Math Fair and learn from each other. Our guest presenter is Katryne Dubeau, who works with Terry Johansson. I've asked the manager of the "Inspiring Young Minds" store to come set up a booth that day.
   I am looking for teachers to bring their best math stations/activities/games, and set them up to display for our colleagues so that we can learn from each other.
   More information later this fall!

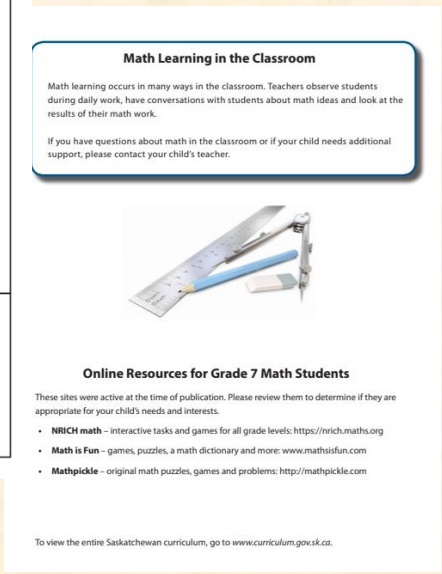
5. Also on the Math Hub I have linked the Ministry's "Family Support Documents". Click on the image of the grade you want to download the full size document. This may be something you'd like to send home to parents with an introduction letter, or link to you're school's next newsletter.
https://christtheteacher.ca/ctt/cttcsmathhub/family-support-documents/

Here's a peek at the Grade 7 one, for example.



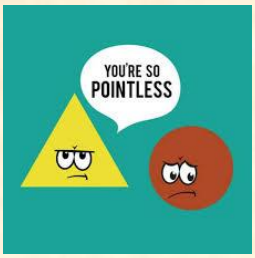






6. I have ordered a copy of each grade 1 – 8 of "Leaps and Bounds" to explore this resource as a tier 2 intervention. It contains diagnostics and a map of how to respond to identified learning gaps. We can also use it to respond to gaps identified in the screeners. If anyone would like to explore this with me or trial it, I'd be very interested. Just call or text me at 306-621-2248 , or call the office306-783-8787 or email smitc01@cttcs.ca

To learn more, click here



Start your year off with a survey! How do your students feel about math? Do they have anxiety you should be aware of? Or learning needs?
We can learn a lot about the state of math in our classrooms, school, and home by simply asking students. It's a great way to get to know kids, and model respect by responding to their requests. Here's an example:

1. How do you feel about learning math?

2. Tell me some qualities of a good math teacher:

3. Describe a math classroom that you would feel comfortable learning in:

4. What types of math do you feel you are pretty good at?

5. Are there any math skills that have given you trouble in the past?

6. What do I need to know about you as a math learner?

7. What do you need from me as your teacher?

8. What helps you feel good about your math ability?

9. What would you ask of your fellow students in this room?

10. What really helps you learn math best? Circle all that apply and add your own!

Adjust this and make it your own! For younger grades, you may want more responses to circle or a likert scale

Practice **Clear explanation** **Homework** **Working with a partner** **Working in a group**

Talking about Math **Working on a dry erase board** **Teaching others** **Getting help from family**

Doing practice questions in my notebook **Watching videos** **Using Mathletics (or other program)**

Practicing by playing math games **Having another student teach me** **Journalling**

Seeing examples while I practice **Reviewing** **Working one-on-one with teacher**

Working in small group with teacher **Using manipulatives** **Doing presentations**

Anything else? _____

If you do a survey and are comfortable sharing your student responses with me, I'd really appreciate it as an opportunity to know more about the students in our schools.

I promise to try my best to:

Finally: A great way to build relationships and model respect is to be very transparent with our students about our continual efforts to improve our own practice. As we set class routines, we are asking students to behave a certain way for us, and do certain things as part of a class community. But do we ever take a moment to tell them what *we* plan to do for *them*?

I keep a one page document displayed behind my desk, that says "My promises to my Students". At the beginning of the year, I tell students these are the things I promise to do for them (or try my best anyway!). Sometimes I need reminding, but posting that document where I see it every day helps me remember to work on these things:

I promise to try my best to:

- Call on everyone fairly
- Wait long enough for answers
- Make time to help students that need me
- Learn things about my students' hobbies, passions, homes and personalities
- Accommodate all my learners based on their varying needs
- Respect all answers and points of view
- Give my students feedback about their progress so they know how to succeed
- Continually remind my students that our brains grow and learn continuously
- Leave my stress and difficulties at the door and come in with an open mind to enjoy the people in my room
- Be fully present with my students
- Listen when my students need to talk to me
- Treat everyone as fairly as possible
- Treat everyone with kindness
- Hold everyone equally accountable to our classroom community
- Help each of my learners reach their potential
- Protect each of my students from unfair or unkind treatment

ADD YOUR OWN, MAYBE INCLUDE THINGS SUGGESTED ON YOUR CLASS SURVEY! Be Creative! Be honest and true. Be vulnerable. It is very powerful for our students to see us as learners as well.

With that, Cheers! Happy New Year! May you have a rich and rewarding year. I'd love any opportunity to come and work in your classroom with you. Maybe you want to try something new? I can be there as an extra set of hands!