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# 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:

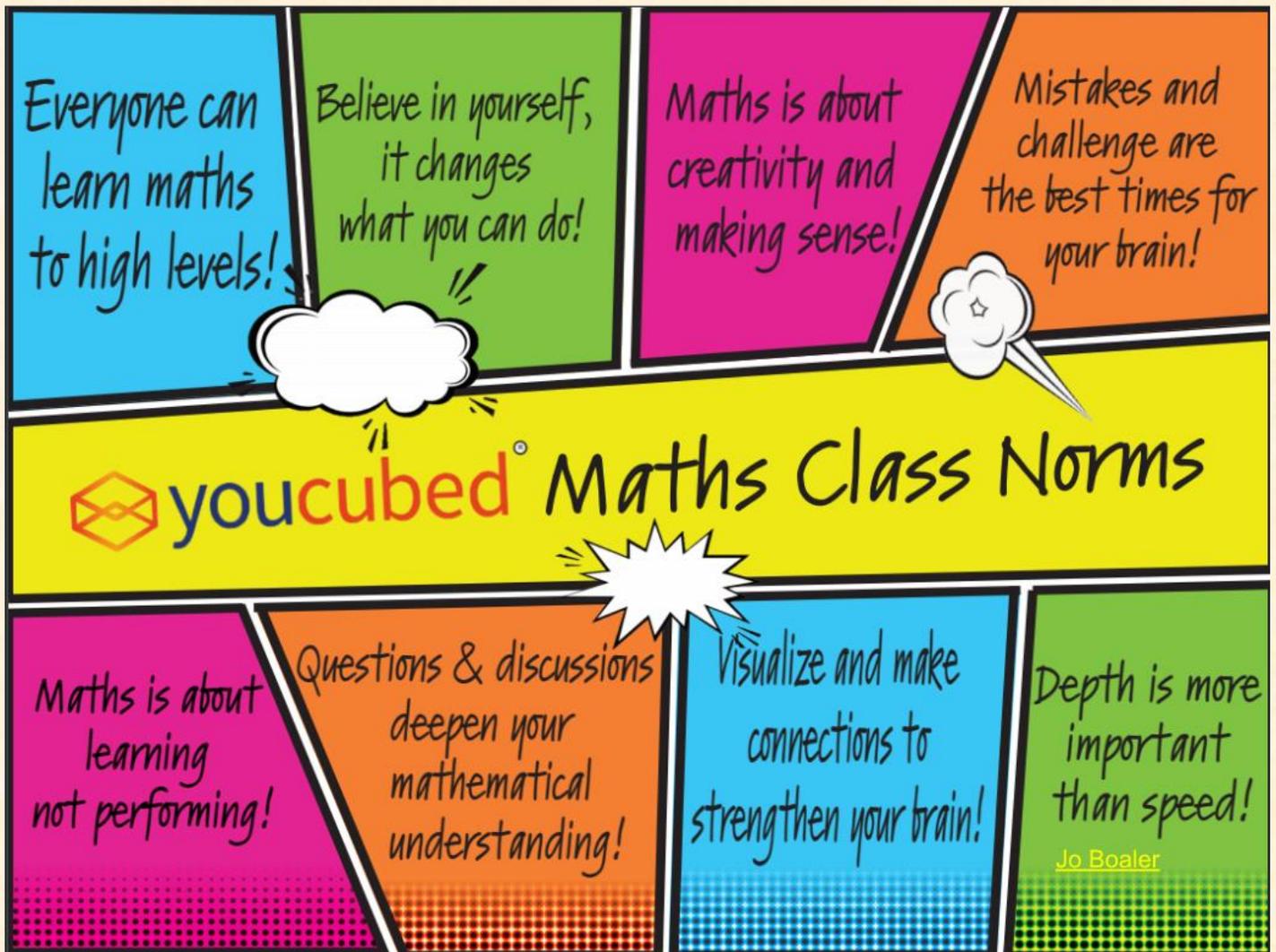
- **R2D2:** This task helps set norms for the classroom such as inclusivity while sparking curiosity. **Learn more about this 3-act math task.**
- **Noah's Ark:** A visual task that gets students collaborating by asking them to balance out each side of the ark. **Printout available here.**

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

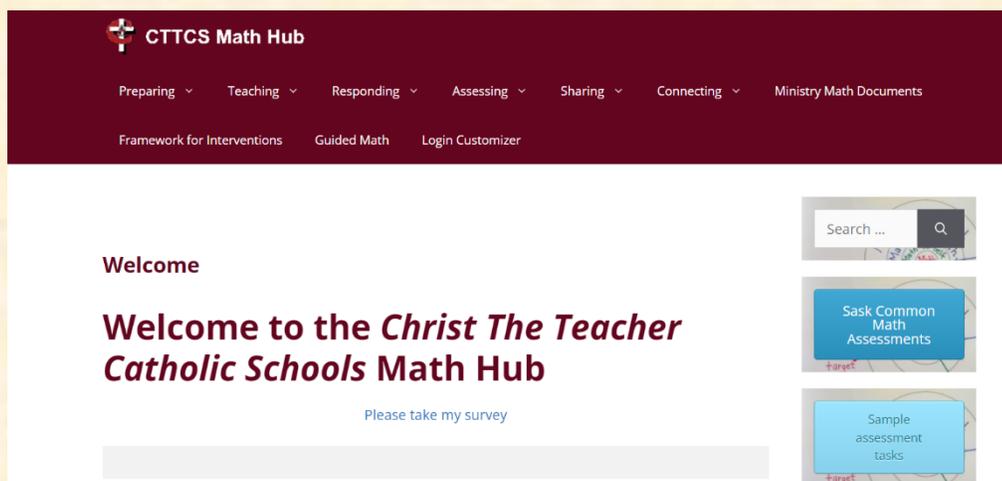
1. Screeners will be ready by end of next week. Our goal is to give them full group somewhere in the last 2 weeks of Sept/First week of Oct. Remember, this is our first run at these! You're going to find errors and question items that are less than perfect. Just jot these things down and I'll continue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

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

**Building Math Success**

**GRADE 7**

**Be Positive and Supportive**

When you talk about math ideas and show how math is part of daily life, you are showing how math is important. You can encourage your child to think positively and be persistent as you work together to build math confidence and math understanding.

**Make Math Real at Home**

- Discuss how math is part of everyday activities, such as sports, music and art.
- Comment on and discuss the meaning of charts and graphs that you may see online or in the news.
- Estimate and/or calculate the price of a take-out meal for your family.
- Calculate discounts and find the least expensive options for things such as cell phone plans.
- Interpret and compare sports statistics.
- Calculate travel times, taking breaks and time zones into account.

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**Overview of Grade 7 Math**

- Learn divisibility rules for dividing by 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.
  - For example, a number is divisible by three if the sum of the digits is divisible by 3; even numbers are always divisible by 2; numbers ending in 5 or 0 are divisible by 5.
- Understand the placement of decimals when adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing; solve equations with two or more decimal numbers.
  - For  $12.33 \times 2.4$ , think  $12 \times 2 = 24$ ; therefore the decimal in the final product will be placed so that the answer is in the tens (in this case, after the 24). The answer will not be in the ones or hundreds.
- Express decimals as fractions, and fractions as decimals, including repeating decimals.
  - Decimals such as 0.1 and 0.25 are terminating decimals, and as a fraction are written as  $\frac{1}{10}$  and  $\frac{25}{100}$ .
  - The fraction  $\frac{1}{3}$  expressed as a decimal is 0.333333..., which is written as  $0.\overline{3}$ , a repeating decimal.
- Order a set of numbers containing decimals, fractions and/or whole numbers.
  - For example,  $0.1 < \frac{1}{2} < \frac{3}{4} < 0.5 < \frac{2}{3} < 0.8 < 0.9$
- Understand the meaning of percents between 0% and 100%.
  - If an item costs \$19.99 and the additional taxes are 11%, what is the total cost of the item?
- Add and subtract positive fractions and mixed numbers.
  - $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} = \frac{3}{6} + \frac{2}{6} = \frac{5}{6}$
  - $1\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} = 1\frac{3}{6} + \frac{2}{6} = 1\frac{5}{6}$
- Add and subtract integers.
  - For example,  $6 + 3 = 9$ ;  $-6 + 3 = -3$ ;  $-6 + (-3) = -9$ ;  $-3 - (-6) = 3$
- Understand relationships among patterns, graphs and linear relations.
  - A gaming site charges a \$5 membership fee and \$2 a day to play on the network.
 

Number of days (x)	Cost (y)
1	7
2	9
3	11
4	13
5	15
- Find solutions to linear equations and solve problems using equations.
  - What value does "x" need to be to balance the scale? As an equation, this is written as  $4x + 7 = 25$ .
  - Kelly sorted 37 hockey cards into 4 groups with 5 cards left over. The number of cards in each group can be determined by using the equation  $4x + 5 = 37$ , with x being the number of cards in each group.

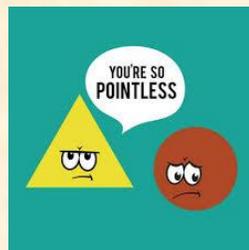
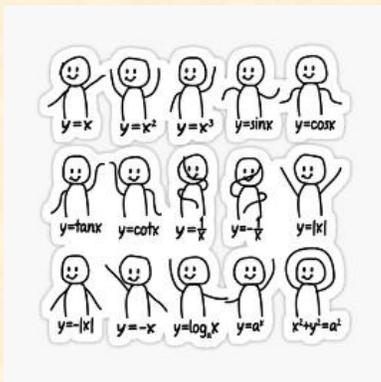
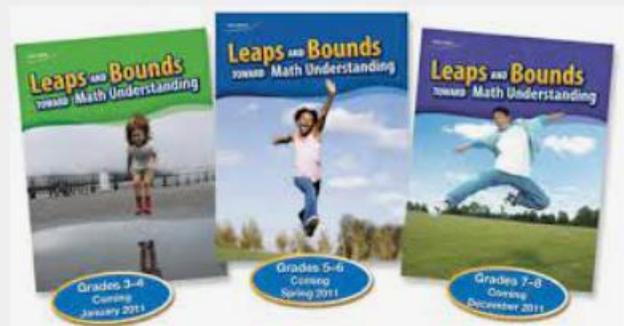
**Math Learning in the Classroom**

Math learning occurs in many ways in the classroom. Teachers observe students during daily work, have conversations with students about math ideas and look at the results of their math work.

If you have questions about math in the classroom or if your child needs additional support, please contact your child's teacher.

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 office 306-783-8787 or email [smitc01@cttcs.ca](mailto: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 on 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!*