

Four Ways to Practice Math Facts

from The Midway Elementary Academic Support Team

As students move through elementary school, math becomes more complex. A stumbling block for many students is that they don't know their math facts. Math facts are to math what sight words are to reading. They are an important building block for success. Problem solving that requires multiple steps is much more difficult for a student who is still using his or her fingers to solve basic math at the end of second grade.

The second grade standard to earn a 3 on the report card for the second quarter states, **"Solves 35 or more one digit addition and subtraction facts (to 18) in three minutes."** Below are some ways that the student can practice. Regular practice for 10-15 minutes daily would really help your child.

Currently your child is solving ____ facts in three minutes.

Wrap Up Practice

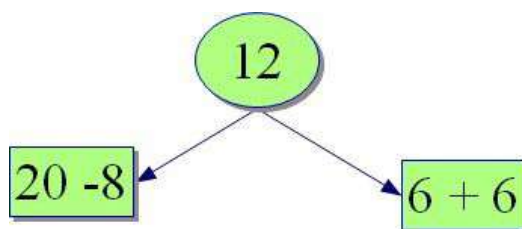
The students are bringing home a wrap up. This is a hands-on math practice tool. If possible, your child should practice 2-3 of the keys by wrapping the string around and saying the problems out loud. You can help by timing your child and telling them how many seconds or minutes it takes to complete a key. The goal is for the student to complete a key correctly in under 30 seconds.

Number Brainstorm

Make a circle and in the middle put a number. Start small. Have your child draw a line from the circle and put a number problem on it. That number problem should equal the number in the circle. Tell your child that you are giving them 2 minutes to come up with as many problems as they can that equals that number. Go over the problems with the child and make sure they are correct. If they are only coming up with 4 or 5 addition, subtraction or multiplication problems during that time then set a goal for them to increase to 10 problems. Once your child can easily create 10 problems, push to him/her to create 12 or 15 problems in the time allotted.

Once they get how to do this you can encourage them by tweaking the rules.

- Outlaw adding/subtracting 0, 1, or 2 from the number as being too easy.
- Outlaw the use of 10 in the problems they create.
- Only allow 3 addition problems.



Retiring Flashcards

- Get a stack of flashcards. Tell your child that you are going to show them the flashcard for 3 seconds. If they can give the answer in that time then the card becomes his/hers. If it takes the child longer then it stays in the pile.
- Go through the cards for 5-10 minutes. Each flashcard that the child gets goes in his or her pile.
- At the end of the practice session retire the ones that are in the child's pile by putting them in a plastic bag labeled retired.

Flip and Create

- Write the numbers 1-20 on a piece of paper. This is an answer sheet.
- Get a deck of cards. Remove the jack, king, queen and ace.
- Put the cards face down.
- Have the child flip two cards over and create an addition or subtraction problem with the numbers. The answer to the problem gets crossed out on the answer sheet.
- For example if the child flipped a 4 and a 6, the child could create $6 + 4$ and cross out number 10 or $6 - 4$ and cross out the number 2.
- The goal is for the child to use their math knowledge to cross out all the numbers on the answer sheet.

If your child likes using the computer, the following web sites also are good for math fact practice. Under Student Support on the Midway Site the Academic Support Team's also has a whole page of math practice resources.

Math Magician

<http://resources.oswego.org/games/mathmagician/cathymath.html>

Aplusmath.com

<http://www.aplusmath.com/Flashcards/index.html>

Math Baseball

<http://www.funbrain.com/math/index.html>