

6-8 IN FOCUS



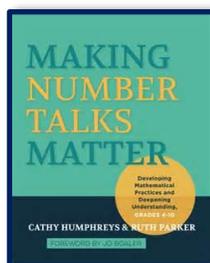
A monthly e-newsletter brought to you by Mathematically Connected Communities

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2017

Welcome to the 2017- 2018 School Year!



First Weeks of School:
Establishing an SBLE



Number Talks to do in
your classroom



MC² Online: Resources
to support our continued
learning

First Weeks of School



Everyone in MC² would like to wish you a wonderful start to the 2017-2018 school year! We so enjoyed learning with you this summer at MathLab™ and Institute and are looking forward to our continued learning during the year.

We wanted to remind you about two things to have on your radar as you start the school year: creating a Standards-Based Learning Environment (SBLE) and thinking about providing concrete learning experiences for students as they make sense of mathematical ideas that are new to them.

SBLE and Norms

Starting to build an SBLE is also an important thing to implement during the first week of school. The SBLE classroom is one where students build conceptual understanding of mathematics by using sense-making strategies to test out their mathematical ideas—students explain their solution strategies, multiple perspectives are encouraged and valued, and the teacher uses students' thinking to build discussion and work towards shared understanding for the class.

At the beginning of the school year, co-creating classroom norms with your students is a great way to start! Co-creating norms allows students to have voice in the expectation for group work and classroom discussions. There are many math activities that can be used to launch the norms discussion. The key is providing an activity that requires students to work together to complete a task. We have posted a few team-building activities to our 6-8 Edmodo page. Please add more to our site if you have activities that you have found effective for team-building.

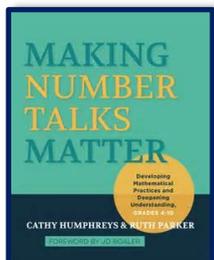
First Weeks of School



Concrete Learning Experiences

Current research in mathematics education tells us that students build strong mathematical understanding by moving from concrete to abstract thinking. When we ask students to think abstractly about a concept before they have had experiences in concrete, practical situations, their knowledge becomes fragile, based on memorizing procedures rather than grounded in conceptual understanding (Boaler, Van der Walle et al. & Galen et al.) In MathLab™, we experienced many concrete and “real-world” explorations of math concepts and connected these experiences to mathematical models and interpretations of the context. Students used the concrete experience of scaling, measuring, and creating various models of backyard designs to engage in meaningful use of ratio language and proportional thinking grounded in the context of scaling. They engaged in practical and concrete explorations that lend themselves to mathematical sense-making. When developing mathematics understanding in children, consider the concrete experiences that will build a strong foundation that students can reference when transitioning to abstract manipulations.

Number Talks



Number Talks is a math routine that is making a big difference in MC² classrooms! While the idea is simple, it’s one of those “teacher moves” that takes practice and there are always ways to get better.

Every month in our newsletter we will have suggestions for Number Talks you can do at your grade level to support students in developing number sense and computational fluency.

August/September Number Talk Ideas will be posted on our 6-8 Edmodo page. If you are asking *what are good Number Talks to start with in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade*, visit our 6-8 Edmodo page at <https://edmo.do/j/er9ge4>

MC² Online Resources



We have so many things to learn and share this year in our 6-8 group and we are going to do that using a platform called Edmodo. Imagine an interface very similar to Facebook, but it’s private—you have to be invited and have a code to get in—and the focus is all about 6-8 math teaching and learning. You can join our Edmodo group by clicking on the following link: <https://edmo.do/j/er9ge4> You will be asked to log in to your Edmodo account or create an account if you do not already have one. You can also log in using Office 365 or Google. An Edmodo Quick Tip Guide is also attached to this email to assist you in joining a group.

On Edmodo we will be able to share videos, pictures, files, questions, ideas, and upcoming events. We will also be scheduling occasional online “get-togethers” where those who are interested can go online and share how our implementation is going. If there are things you’re interested in learning more about with your colleagues—6-8 Math, SBLE, Number Talks, LES, Questioning & Discourse—let us know!
