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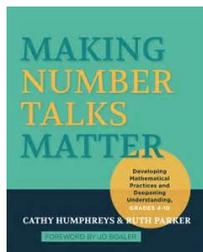
A monthly eNewsletter brought to you by Mathematically Connected Communities

AUGUST 2017

Welcome to the 2017- 2018 School Year!



First Weeks of School:
SBLE, Norms, &
Concrete Learning
Experiences



Number Talks



Classroom Video: How we
can use it to grow our
teaching this year?



MC² Online Resources
to support our
continued learning

First Weeks of School



Everyone in MC² would like to wish you a wonderful 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 the 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

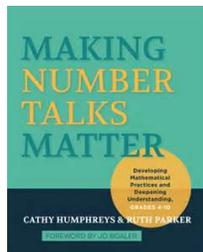
At the beginning of the school year, co-creating classroom norms with your students is a great way to start! Co-creating norms allows students to have voice in the expectation for group work and classroom discussions. There are many math activities that can be used to launch the norm discussion. The key is providing an activity that requires students to work together to complete a task. Creating norms builds an environment where students feel safe to take risks with their mathematical thinking.

Starting to build an SBLE is also an important idea to implement during the first weeks 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.

Concrete Learning Experiences

Current research in math 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 being grounded in conceptual understanding (Boaler, Van der Walle, Galen et al.) During [MathLab™](#), we experienced many concrete and "real-world" explorations of math concepts and connected these experiences to mathematical models. When developing mathematics understanding in children, consider the concrete experiences that will build a strong foundation that students can reference when transitioning to abstract manipulation of number. Angry Birds was an engaging concrete experience that provided opportunity for students to develop conceptual meaning regarding the attributes of a parabola. Students engaged in practical and concrete explorations that lend themselves to mathematical sense-making.

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 flexibility with operations and number sense.

Videos: MathLab™ and Your Classroom



When we got your feedback this summer—at MathLab™ and at Institute—about what would be the most helpful resource to have in our online community, nearly everyone mentioned videos!

We are working on collecting videos from our work this summer and we'd like to encourage you to share videos from your classroom, as well: interviews, Number Talks, parts of LES lessons you're trying, or anything that you think might help our learning community grow stronger in our math teaching practice!

MC² Online Resources



We have so many things to learn and share this year 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 Algebra I math teaching and learning. You can join our Edmodo group by clicking on the following link: <https://edmo.do/j/pkud8v>. If requested, enter Group Code qgbzgx. 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, upcoming events, and have virtual discussions. We will also be scheduling occasional online “get-togethers” where those who are interested can join online and share how our implementation is going. If there are things you're interested in learning more about with your colleagues—Conceptual Understanding in Algebra I, SBLE, Number Talks, LES, Questioning & Discourse—let us know!