

PARENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) **Why *Math in Focus*?**

Our current math curriculum used multiple supplemental resources to meet our learners' needs. *Math in Focus* provides a rigorous standards-aligned math program for students through an emphasis on problem solving skill development. Instruction focuses on developing student understanding of the 'how' and 'why' behind mathematical concepts. The program introduces new concepts with manipulatives, extends understanding through pictorial representations, and culminates student mastery in abstract mathematical concepts. To learn more about the program, visit the *Math in Focus* website:

<http://www.hmhco.com/shop/education-curriculum/math/math-in-focus-singapore-math#tab-features-k-5>

2) **What research supports the *Math in Focus* program?**

Math in Focus uses the Singapore Math Framework. Students taught using this Framework have consistently outscored all countries since its inception in 1995. The Singapore Framework centers instruction strategies on mathematical problem solving while developing a positive attitude towards mathematics and allowing students to monitor their own learning. The benchmark exams used for this research are TIMSS and PISA. For more information, visit TIMSS – Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (<https://nces.ed.gov/timss/>) and PISA - Program for International Student Assessment (<https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf>).

3) **What are the major differences between *Math in Focus* and our previous program?**

Math in Focus is a K-8 comprehensive program that develops strong algebraic concepts and problem solving skills. Instructional strategies incorporate direct instruction, cooperative learning, and guided and independent practice. Each unit begins with a pre-assessment to determine what students are ready to learn. Additional instructional strategies and materials that reteach or extend concepts are provided.

4) **What type of homework will my child bring home?**

Student homework will be independent practice based on concepts taught and practiced in the classroom. While parents can expect less homework, the problems will require more critical thinking and higher levels of questioning. Along with their textbook, students can use virtual manipulatives on *ThinkCentral* to help them complete homework problems; and they will have a textbook and workbook to review concepts previously taught. These materials are also available online at *ThinkCentral* (<https://www-k6.thinkcentral.com/ePC/start.do>). All students and their parents will have access to the *Math in Focus* resources on *ThinkCentral*.

5) **How can I help my child?**

If a student does not understand how to complete an assignment, it is best to guide the student to use resources provided in the classroom (i.e. textbook, solved practice problems, notes, tutorial lessons on *ThinkCentral*, etc...). Encouraging a positive attitude towards mathematics and problem solving is important to student success in learning mathematics.

6) **How are teachers trained in *Math in Focus*?**

Teachers begin training in June prior to the first year of implementation. The training sessions continue throughout the first year with full grade level trainings with a *Math in Focus* teacher. District training will continue in succeeding years.

7) **Who do I contact with more questions?**

For questions specific to classroom instruction, please contact your student's teacher. For questions specific to program implementation, please contact Dr. Lydia Hallman, Curriculum Supervisor for Math & Science, at 610-268-1121.