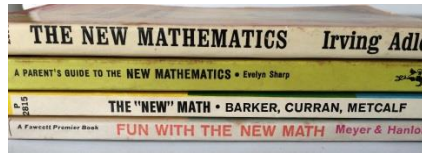


## The (Not-So) New Math



For an interesting experiment, ask a room full of adults to compute  $74 + 18$ . Then, ask how they arrived at their answer. Did they use paper and pencil? Did they count up by 10 and then add 8? Did they count up by 20 and subtract 2? Maybe they added 70 and 10, and then 4 and 8, then 80 and 12. There are multiple ways to add, and we are providing our students with a toolkit of different strategies they can use to do so.

We often see posts on social media from other parents that are snapping photos of their child's homework and expressing frustration with this "new math." The truth of the matter is that the study of mathematics has been around for thousands of years and these procedures have always been in existence. It is not the mathematics that has changed; it is the way we teach it. As students, we did a lot of "skill and drill," rather than learn "how and why" things worked out in our mathematics classrooms. The goal for our current group of students is to understand their thought process and apply it to multiple contexts.

The following is a video that shows multiple ways to add: <https://goo.gl/flif20>

So why do we teach our students multiple ways to add? (Or subtract... or multiply... or divide?)  
The benefits of teaching multiple mathematical methods include...

- This process appeals to multiple types of learning styles. If your child is not able to conceptualize one way, there may be an alternate way that makes more sense to them.
- Number sense is developed.
- It incorporates more play and curiosity.
- When students struggle, teachers are able to intervene on an individual level. By teaching students how to explain their thinking, teachers are able to target strengths and weaknesses and remediate as necessary.
- Develops human understanding and problem solving skills.
- Students can "see" math... hence the "Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract" approach. (Here is a quick video that explains this approach, as it is what we use in our Math In Focus program: <https://goo.gl/YybBbt> )

So what can we do to support our children when they are solving in a method that is different than what we have learned?

- Be interested! It is empowering to a child when they can teach their parents something new! It also helps them develop communication skills and promotes critical thinking.

- Ask to look at examples they have completed in class. Have them describe the work they completed.
- Use ThinkCentral, which is our online component to our Math In Focus Program. The student textbook and workbook are available online, as well as videos for families.  
<https://www-k6.thinkcentral.com/ePC/start.do>
- Look at the library devoted to parent and family resources on EngageNY.  
<https://www.engageny.org/>
- Reach out to your child's teacher. See if they can offer and suggestions or activities that would be beneficial to your student.
- For more general ideas, look at this document from the National Education Association.  
[http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/44013\\_NEA\\_W\\_L9.pdf](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/44013_NEA_W_L9.pdf)

**Thank you for attending!!!**

If you have further questions, please contact Melissa Salvatori,  
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