

## **MathLinks 7 FAQ**

1. We are going on holidays for two weeks and my child will miss school. He is taking his textbook with him and we have asked the teacher which lessons he will miss. Will he be able to teach himself what he needs?

**Answer:** This depends on how well your child understands the concepts and skills that have already been taught and how well he works on his own. The following ideas might help him do the work the teacher has outlined.

- Read and discuss the opening text at the beginning of the chapter with him. Note the key words. Together, look them up in the glossary and discuss what they mean. Read the opening Math Link and discuss how your child might do what is suggested.
- As your child starts each section of the chapter, have him read the introduction and discuss that and the picture with him. What new terms are introduced? How is the opening picture related to the material being studied?
- If you have some background in mathematics, you may wish to work with your child on the Explore the Math at the beginning of each section. If you do this, remember that the idea of this exploration is to have your child experiment with some new ideas and then consider what he learned during his experiment. Don't tell him what he *should* have learned. Instead, listen to his ideas.
- Have your child read each Example and explain to you what is being asked. Have him examine the solution and consider why it works. Then have him try the Show You Know and explain how he did it. Usually, he should follow the same procedure as in the Example. If he uses a different one, have him justify his choice of strategies.
- Once your child has completed all of the Examples, have him read the Key Ideas and explain in his own words what they mean. You might wish to have him do the Communicate the Ideas to show that he understands the Key Ideas.
- When your child does the Practise questions, have him review each Example before doing the related questions. You may wish to have him explain how the question is different from and the same as the Example. You may also wish to have him explain why he used the methods he did to answer the questions. This is particularly important when the Example shows two or more methods.
- The Apply questions are a little harder than the Practise questions. Consider having your child read each question, identify the key words, and then explain in his own words what the question is asking. Then have him answer the question and explain his thinking.
- Encourage your child to try each question, then to compare his answer to the one in the back of the student resource. If the answers differ, have him consider where he may have gone wrong, then try the question again. The advantage of having answers in the back of the student resource is that

students can use them as guides to help them see whether or not they are using useful strategies and doing accurate calculations.

- Go to the Student Centre in the *MathLinks 7* Online Learning Centre and access the chapter quizzes, word puzzles, and games. There is one for each chapter. You may enjoy doing these activities together.

2. I would like to help my child with her math. How do I know what the most important points are that she needs to work on?

**Answer:** The most important points in each section are outlined in the Key Ideas. Have her review the Key Ideas in each section. Have her explain each Key Idea in her own words. Ask her to provide a sample problem for each Key Idea and explain how to solve that problem.

3. We are new to Canada and sometimes my child does not understand the words the teacher uses. Sometimes, too, the book use words that he does not know. I cannot help him.

**Answer:** This is a problem for many students who may speak English as an additional language. It is important for your child to let the teacher know when language is a barrier to his learning, especially since mathematics terminology is an important part of learning math.

He could help himself by learning the key terms in each section. Also, he can identify the words that are giving him problems, ask for help defining those words, and then make his own dictionary that provides definitions for words commonly used in each chapter. Many of those words are in the Key Words list at the beginning of each chapter. Each of these words is defined in the glossary starting on page 499 in *MathLinks 7*. In addition, there is a glossary in the Student Centre of the Online Learning Centre.

4. My child struggles in math. How can her father and I help her with her homework?

**Answer:** You could start by having her explain what she did in math class that day. What did she find interesting? What was new? How does it relate to other things that she already knows? Try to keep the conversation upbeat and positive.

- Have her show you the Examples in the section she is working on. Ask her to explain what is being asked. Have her explain how the Example is solved and why the method works. If there is more than one method, have her explain which one she prefers, and why.
- If she has not already done the Show You Know for each Example, have her do it now. If she has done the Show You Know, have her explain to you how she did it. Sometimes, a child may find a way to answer a question that is different from the one in the student resource. That is great. If she does not

have a procedure, you may wish to review with her the procedures shown in the related Example. Often, there is more than one procedure that your child can choose from.

- Reviewing the Examples like this will help your child remember the key concepts and skills of the section. These are reinforced in the Key Ideas. Ask her to explain the Key Ideas in her own words. You may wish to have her give you a sample problem for each Key Idea.
- When your child does the Practise questions, have her review each Example before doing the related questions. You may wish to have her explain how the question is different from and the same as the Example. You may also wish to have her explain why she used the methods she did to answer the questions. This is particularly important when the Example suggests two or more methods.
- The Apply questions are a little harder than the Practise questions. Consider having your child read each question, identify the key words, and then explain in her own words what the question is asking. Then have her answer the question and explain her thinking.
- Encourage your child to try each assigned question, then to compare her answer to the one in the back of the student resource. If the answers differ, have her explain her thinking and consider where she may have gone wrong, then try the question again. The advantage of having answers in the back of the student resource is that students can use the answers as guides to help them see whether or not they are using useful strategies and doing accurate calculations.
- Encourage her to have fun with math by playing the Math Games at the end of each chapter. These provide additional practice in a non-threatening way.
- Go to the Student Centre in the *MathLinks 7* Online Learning Centre and access the online games. There is one for each chapter. Either play them with your child or invite a classmate for a math games get-together.
- Encourage your child to make up an original game using the math skills in the chapter. Play that game with your child.

5. How can we help our child prepare for his math exams? He says you cannot study for math but he does not do well on his exams.

**Answer:** Many students need to learn how to prepare for math exams. Try the following ideas:

- The math exams are based on the work students do each day. One of the best ways to prepare your child is to encourage him to do his daily math assignment. As he works, have him consider what he is able to do and what is giving him difficulty. Encourage him to ask his teacher to explain the things he finds puzzling.
- Work with your child to keep a list of things that he is still working to understand.
- Each section of the student resource has a Key Ideas section. If your child has not already done so, have him write each key idea in his own words.

- Make sure that your child can do each Show You Know and each type of Practise question. You can tell the different types of Practise questions because they refer to a different Example.
- As he studies for the exam, have your child do the Chapter Review and identify which questions he has difficulty with. He may need to ask his teacher for help with figuring some of these out. Once he has, look for similar questions in the Practice Test that he can do to make sure that he can do similar questions.
- Have him go to the Student Centre in the *MathLinks 7* Online Learning Centre and access the chapter quizzes.

When your child does this work, emphasize that understanding is important. He needs to make sure that he understands how to solve the questions he is trying so that he can solve similar questions that address the same concept.

6. My child needs lots of practice questions to be able to really understand and remember. Are there enough questions? Where else can we find practice questions?

**Answer:** Some learners need more questions than others, so it is always difficult to put enough questions for everyone in the student resource. You can find additional questions in the following places:

- Go to the Student Centre in the *MathLinks 7* Online Learning Centre and access the chapter quizzes.
- Ask your child's teacher for copies of the Extra Practice worksheets for each section in *MathLinks 7*.
- The *MathLinks 7 Practice and Homework Book* has additional questions. Talk to the teacher about getting one of these for your child.
- Play the Math Games at the end of each chapter. These provide additional practice in a non-threatening way.
- Go to the Student Centre in the *MathLinks 7* Online Learning Centre and access the online games. There is one for each chapter.
- Encourage your child to make up an original game using the math skills in the chapter. Play that game with your child.

7. My child is excellent in math and needs to be challenged or he gets bored. Are there questions or topics that will interest him?

**Answer:** Some parts of the *MathLinks 7* student resource have been developed specifically for learners like your child.

- Have him try the Challenge in Real Life at the end of each chapter.
- Have him go to the Student Centre in the *MathLinks 7* Online Learning Centre and access the online brain teasers, general web games, project ideas, and brain teasers.
- The Teacher Centre of the Online Learning Centre has an alternative challenge for most chapters. Have him ask his teacher for these worksheets.

- The Teacher Centre of the Online Learning Centre also has Problems of the Week and Gifted and Enrichment worksheets that provide questions intended for this type of student. Have him ask his teacher for these worksheets.
8. Neither my wife nor I are able to help our child with her math because it is different than when we were taught. Will the textbook show her everything that she needs to know for grade 7?

**Answer:** If you were taught math using traditional methods, you may be inspired by how students learn math now because it is so interesting. Students use a lot of hands-on materials. They do experiments. They work with other students. They listen to the ideas of other students and discuss how their ideas may differ in some ways.

The basis for all of these differences is in the student resource; however, it takes a good teacher to bring the resource to life. Having said that, your child can use the *MathLinks 7* student resource to reinforce what she is doing in the classroom. Here are some tips to help her:

- As your child works on each section of the chapter, have her talk to you about the introduction and explain to you what it means to her. What new terms are introduced? How is the opening picture related to the material being studied?
- Have your child read each Example and explain to you what is being asked. Have her examine the solutions and consider why they work. Then have her explain to you how to do the Show You Know questions.
- Have her reword each of the Key Ideas sections in her own words and provide new examples for each point.
- These activities will give your child a good basis for doing her math work. When she has an assignment, encourage her to try each question, then to compare her answer to the one in the back of the student resource. If the answers differ, have her consider where she may have gone wrong, then try the question again. The advantage of having answers in the back of the student resource is that students can use these as guides to help them see whether or not they are using useful strategies and doing accurate calculations.
- Help to make math fun for your child. Invite a classmate over to play the Math Games at the end of each chapter. These provide additional practice in a non-threatening way.