AAUW PROGRAM IN A BOX

LET'S READ MATH™

AAUW | BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS

AT A GLANCE

LET'S READ MATH

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Use this Program in a Box to help elementary school children talk about and enjoy doing math.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Elementary school children

PROGRAM FORMAT

Let's Read Math Funbook lessons and workshops or a single program or series of programs that you develop on your own

TIME CONSIDERATIONS

Time frame: After school, weekends, summer

Estimated planning time: Three to six months

Estimated presentation time: One to 1.5 hours per program

RESOURCES NEEDED

Venue: School, library, YMCA or YWCA, day care center

Supplies: Let's Read Math Funbooks, copies of Funbook pages, or copies of your own program lessons; materials for hands-on activities (for example, glue sticks, markers, colored paper, rolls of coins, chart paper, pencils, pasta, baggies)

Optional supplies: Teachers' guides, workshop binders, materials for take-home activities, books that are not available at a local library, snacks for participants

Handouts: Funbooks, copies of Funbook pages, punch-out pages, lesson and math activity materials, and optional take-home activities

Budget considerations: Cost of Funbooks, copies of Funbook or your own lesson pages, hands-on math activity materials, optional teachers' guides, workshop binders, take-home activity materials, and optional snacks

BENEFITS TO YOUR STATE, BRANCH, OR COMMUNITY

- Expands AAUW's visibility as community leaders and advocates for math literacy
- Recruits new members, especially if potential members see this as an opportunity to help their own children and grandchildren
- Establishes community partnerships with organizations that need your help, such as libraries, after-school centers, family centers, YWCAs, and Girl Scouts troops
- Raises funds from the business community
- Helps children have fun with math
- Helps adults to learn how to talk about math and help children explore interesting math ideas
- Improves math attitudes in the general population
- Helps children do better in school math and aspire to work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers

PROGRAM DETAILS

THE STORY OF LET'S READ MATH

In October 2004, Let's Read Math began as a community outreach project of the AAUW Makefield Area (PA) Branch. The project was initiated by AAUW member Claire Passantino, an elementary school mathematics educator who was involved in evaluating large-scale efforts to reform math and science education across the United States. Passantino began doing parent-child workshops at the local library in Yardley, Pennsylvania. The branch continues to do these workshops at various locations in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and Mercer County, New Jersey. The workshops have been replicated by other AAUW groups in other communities and have become popular as family nights in schools.

PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

AAUW members will find that leading a workshop is a gratifying experience, but it takes commitment and energy. If you move ahead with this project, organize a committee to help decide where to do your workshops, who will be involved, and what roles they will take. Some people will prefer to read the books but not do math. Others prefer to help organize the workshop materials. Others help on the day of the event but do not want to be a leader. Some will want to organize and lead the workshops. Find the strengths of the members in your group and work accordingly.

An alternative way for AAUW branches to offer volunteer support for Let's Read Math is to find groups who want to do the program—such as school groups, scout troops, libraries, after-school centers, or women's shelters—and provide the materials and assistance they need. Members of your AAUW group can then act as workshop assistants or as mentors who help children read the books and do the math activities. If you find a group other than an AAUW branch or state organization that would like to lead a Let's Read Math workshop, have the group leave their contact information on the Let's Read Math website. The Let's Read Math program staff is interested in helping any volunteer groups that want to put on the workshop.

THREE WAYS TO DO LET'S READ MATH

ONE: FUNBOOKS

Funbooks are teaching tools that include math topics drawn from the state and national standards for teaching mathematics. Each Funbook contains 16 sets of worksheets that correspond to children's books. The covers of the Funbooks have punch-out math manipulative tools that are used for some of the math activities inside. Funbooks and their accompanying punch-outs can be purchased for each student; or if you want to do only one or a few lessons, you can photocopy the pages of the Funbook and purchase separate punch-outs for each child. (Copying a complete Funbook violates copyright laws.)

Funbooks can be used in classrooms, after-school centers, day camps, libraries, or other environments where the intention is to provide children with a series of lessons to build their enjoyment and conceptual understanding of math. You can purchase Funbooks at the Let's Read Math website or Amazon.com.

For more information about Funbooks, see the Let's Read Math Funbook descriptions in the tools section below.

TWO: WORKSHOPS

Workshops consist of embellished lessons for several books found in the Funbooks. These hands-on lessons can be used in classrooms or after-school centers, sometimes over several days. Children and parents frequently use these workshop lessons together during family nights. Most workshops include a recommended take-home item so children can continue to explore math ideas after the workshop ends.

The Let's Read Math website includes downloadable outlines for each lesson and a downloadable order form for optional Let's Read Math materials, including binders that contain workshop directions and master copies for photocopying handouts. The children's books are also available upon request from Let's Read Math; however, many AAUW groups find the books at a local library or purchase them from a bookstore or online.

If you wish to offer a Let's Read Math workshop, Projects in Education staff can come to your site and put on a workshop for you or train your staff to do their own workshops (there is a fee for workshop materials and travel expenses). You can also purchase workshop manuals and take-home items for children at the Projects in Education website or download free outline materials that include descriptions of the hands-on activities on the Let's Read Math website.

For more information about the workshops, see the Let's Read Math workshop descriptions in the tools section below.

THREE: ON YOUR OWN

You can develop your own Let's Read Math lessons. Find a good children's book that suggests a math topic, think about a fun math activity, and go for it! A few books are listed in the database on the Let's Read Math website. You can download a list of all of the books in the database or search the database by title, author, or math topic.

In addition to the list of children's books on the Let's Read Math website, other good websites to investigate for books to use in developing your own Let's Read Math lessons include the following:

- Math Cats: a math and literature idea bank, including books listed by math topic and age range
- Math Solutions: book collections and resources featured on the Math Solutions website, founded by Marilyn Burns
- Everyday Mathematics: books recommended for use in the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project's Everyday Mathematics resource center

IMPLEMENTING LET'S READ MATH

PURCHASE FUNBOOKS

Allow four to six weeks to order and receive the Funbooks, teacher guides, children's books, or other materials you plan to use in your program.

PREPARE YOUR OWN LESSONS

If you prepare your own lessons and math activities, allow enough time to develop and prepare these materials. You will need an outline of the lesson for the presenter. Typically, the lesson includes a preactivity, talking points about the book you have chosen, math activities, and a wrap-up discussion. For the math activities, prepare clear instructions that all volunteers can follow. You also may find it helpful to prepare a supplies list for each section of the lesson. (For a model, see the outlines on the Let's Read Math website.)

GATHER SUPPLIES

Gather the supplies that you need for your math activities (things like glue sticks, markers, colored paper, rolls of coins, chart paper, pencils, pasta, baggies, and other math-related aids). Some AAUW groups put together a supply box so that basic materials are always on hand.

GET APPROVAL TO OFFER THE PROGRAM

At a school

If you plan to offer Let's Read Math at a school—during the school day, with after-school groups, or as a family-night event—always obtain advance approval from the school administration. This may require a meeting with school administrators to discuss plans and arrangements. Start with the principal so that she or he can tell you what procedures to follow to obtain needed permissions, approvals, and building access. Even if you have already talked to a teacher, be sure to check with the principal.

Be prepared to provide copies of the children's books or lesson materials that you plan to use. Discuss the age group you want to work with, the number of students who will be involved, the lessons you plan to teach, and what dates and times are available for you to come to the school. It may take some time to obtain the proper approval, so build this into your plans. To plan for a successful event at a school, you need the cooperation and support of the principal and teachers with whom you plan to work.

At a non-school venue

If you plan to offer a Let's Read Math program at a day camp, library, Girl Scout troop gathering, YMCA, or other non-school venue, obtain advance approval from the venue administration—the camp director, head librarian, troop leader, or similar administrator. You may be asked to provide a consent form that informs parents about the program and requests their signed permission for their child to participate (see a sample in the tool kit). Be prepared to provide copies of the books and lessons you are going to use. Talk about the age group you want to work with, the number of children who will be involved, the lessons you plan to teach, and possible times and dates. It may take some time to obtain the proper approval, so build this into your plans.

OBTAIN PARENTAL CONSENT

If you opt to or are required to obtain parental consent forms for the children who are participating in the Let's Read Math program, you can adapt the form in the tool kit.

OBTAIN PHOTOGRAPH RELEASES

If you plan to take photographs of children participating in the program, you must have the signed permission of the parent or guardian before doing so. You can adapt the sample photo release form in the Programs-in-a-Box tool kit.

TAKE-HOME ITEMS

If the lesson you are presenting recommends take-home items for participants, decide if you will provide them. If so, allow time to purchase, find, or make them.

SETTINGS FOR LET'S READ MATH EVENTS

AFTER-SCHOOL CENTERS

Funding for after-school centers often requires that they have academic programs for children beyond homework help. Let's Read Math is used at many of these centers as a way to involve children in both reading and math. Quality experiences in after-school settings have the potential for building positive attitudes about math so that most children involved in a Let's Read Math program respond positively to math activities in school. For this reason, it is very important that staff understand the valuable role they play in the lives of the children they work with on a daily basis.

A typical arrangement for doing Let's Read Math in after-school settings is to focus on one book a week. Time is dedicated to reading the book, doing the Funbook pages, and doing other activities to enhance the experience. For example, throughout the Funbook, "talking heads" invite children to do activities that go beyond the pages of the book. Many centers include these extra activities in after-school programs so that children talk with each other, take walks or go on short field trips, work on a computer, interview their parents, play games, write letters, or do other related activities.

FAMILY NIGHTS

Many schools have family math, science, or literacy nights. A Let's Read Math family night is one more alternative. The format also works at programs for Even Start or for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, where Parents and Children Together events are organized. You can select your own books and math activities or use the Let's Read Math workshop manuals. Each workshop follows the same format: Read a book, do a math activity (where parents interact with their children), and send the children home with some kind of math item so they can continue to do math at home.

LIBRARIES

The two basic formats for doing Let's Read Math are to put on full workshops (one to 1.5 hours each) or use the Let's Read Math Funbooks. Workshops are typically organized as after-school activities or as Saturday events; Funbooks are used for independent reading. For the independent reading format, the library will need to house multiple copies of the books. The children then work on their own or with family or friends to complete their Funbook benchmarks by a certain date. For example, the benchmark for kindergarteners might be six books; first graders, eight books; second graders, 10 books; third graders, 12 books; and so on. Establish a cutoff date. Make star charts to show which children have read which books. When the contest is over, have children take a survey about their favorite book and who helped them with the pages and assignments. Share the results of the survey with the children. Award certificates and small prizes to children who reach their benchmarks.

DAY CAMPS

Consult the Let's Read Math workshop manuals to organize a one- to 1.5-hour workshop with math giveaways for the kids or use some of the Funbook activities, which are more abbreviated than those done in a full workshop. Think twice about whether you want to use the complete Funbook. There may be time constraints or staffing considerations. Instead, maybe you can just read and do math activities related to a couple of the books. If you want to use the punch-outs, order additional Let's Read Math stickers and punch-out sets and make photocopies of a few pages from a Let's Read Math Funbook. (Copying a complete Funbook violates copyright laws.)

Some children might want to use Funbooks as a sustained independent reading project. If you have children who are willing to take this challenge, make it an attractive and doable project: Set a goal to finish as many as she or he can by a certain date, or set benchmarks such as six books for kindergarteners, eight for first graders, 10 for second, 12 for third, and so on.

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Membership matters! Help grow the AAUW community by encouraging prospective members to join AAUW. Visit the membership campaign website to learn more.

If your event involves college and university faculty or students or is held on a campus, invite schools that are not yet AAUW college/university partner members to join AAUW and offer their students the benefits that go with AAUW membership. All students attending a C/U partner-member institution are eligible to join AAUW for free as e-students. For more information, visit the AAUW college/university partner recruitment web page.

TOOLS

LET'S READ MATH

LET'S READ MATH TOOLS

- Let's Read Math Funbook descriptions
- Let's Read Math workshop descriptions
- Let's Read Math parental consent form (in the tool kit)
- Let's Read Math photo release form (in the tool kit)

PROGRAMS-IN-A-BOX TOOL KIT

The tool kit includes forms, checklists, and templates that you can modify and adapt for your program or event.

- Attendee sign-in form
- Event evaluation form
- Event planning checklist
- Event registration form
- Sample time line

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT TOOLS

- Individual members
- AAUW college/university partner members

CONTACTS

- For questions or information about this Program in a Box, contact connect@aauw.org or 800/326-2289.

LET'S READ MATH FUNBOOK DESCRIPTIONS

FUNBOOKS ONE AND TWO (GRADES K–4)

Funbook One and Funbook Two grew out of early experiences with Let's Read Math workshops. Although the lessons were developed using second- and third-grade mathematics standards, each lesson can be modified for children in younger and older grades. Punch-outs on the Funbook covers are used as math manipulatives. The foldout cover of Funbook One includes coins, buttons, tangrams, quilt designs, and chicken clothes. Funbook Two includes ice cream cones, fish, pie segments, and roses. A teacher's guide is available with teaching hints and answers for the Funbook pages.

FUNBOOK A (GRADES K–2)

Funbook A was created using mathematics standards for kindergarten through first grade. It was developed at the request of early-childhood educators who wanted math activities for younger students. Each student page has teacher directions on the back, so the Funbook serves as both a student workbook and a teacher guide. As with other Funbooks, both covers include punch-outs related to math activities in the book. Funbook A also has a double page of stickers for even more hands-on fun. If desired, you can photocopy Funbook pages and buy extra punch-outs and stickers as a separate student packet. (Copying a complete Funbook violates copyright laws.)

ADVANCED FUNBOOK (GRADES 4–6 AND OLDER)

The Advanced Funbook was developed using the mathematics standards for grades five and six. Although activities are intended for students in grades four through six, many middle school teachers also find the lessons useful. This Funbook includes a list of websites related to the math topics on a perforated page that can be removed from the Funbook if parents do not permit their children to use the Internet.

All Funbooks are available from the Let's Read Math website or Amazon.com.

LET'S READ MATH WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Each Let's Read Math workshop features one children's book with accompanying math activities. At the end of each workshop, children typically receive a small take-home item so they can continue doing math at home. Workshop manuals are available to use as guides to these complete workshops, which take one to 1.5 hours to complete.

The Let's Read Math website includes a description of the features of each workshop as well as a downloadable chart outlining what to do at the workshop. If you want more guidance, obtain a Projects in Education manual, which has a section devoted to each workshop, including masters for handouts and transparencies, hints for doing the workshop, advice for adapting the workshop for older and younger children, and suggestions for take-home items.

FUNBOOK ONE WORKSHOP

Six workshops related to Funbook One do not require the use of a Funbook, although the Funbook will enhance the workshop experience. A seventh workshop, *Amelia Bedelia*, was developed to introduce the Funbook itself and requires the use of punch-out clothes that appear on the Funbook cover. It is helpful to have the pages in the workshop manual that are related to *Amelia Bedelia*, because they include samples of the three tree diagrams used in the workshop.

FUNBOOK TWO WORKSHOP

Eight workshops related to Funbook Two can be done without using the Funbook, but the Funbook pages enhance the workshop experience.

FUNBOOK A WORKSHOP

Eight workshops related to Funbook A can be done without using the Funbook, but the Funbook pages enhance the workshop experience.

Workshop outlines, math activities, and suggested take-home items are available at the Let's Read Math website. Funbooks and teachers guides can be purchased from the Let's Read Math website or Amazon.com. Workshop manuals are available only from the Let's Read Math website.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LET'S READ MATH

LET'S READ MATH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Let's Read Math is designing alternate ways to offer assistance and professional development to AAUW groups who want to get started with the program. Let's Read Math offers on-site training sessions for a fee, to cover workshop materials and travel expenses. A few videos are available, and others are being developed. Let's Read Math is investigating distance-learning alternatives such as webinars and Skype. Contact Claire Passantino at Projects in Education (see below) for updates on new training alternatives.

LET'S READ MATH MATERIALS

The Let's Read Math website includes

- an overview of the program and frequently asked questions;
- descriptions of the Funbooks;
- descriptions and resources for each workshop, including the workshop outline, math activity, and suggested take-home item;
- a database of books that can be used to create your own Let's Read Math event; and
- information on how to purchase Funbooks, teacher guides, book collections used in Let's Read Math events, workshop manuals, getting-started guides, and student packs (additional sets of stickers and punch-outs).

Look for the AAUW icon on the website. Click on the selections to find out more about AAUW's involvement with the program and descriptions of the work that is taking place in various AAUW branches.

PROJECTS IN EDUCATION LLC

Projects in Education is a limited liability corporation established by Let's Read Math Project Director Claire Passantino in June 2005. The company publishes the Let's Read Math Funbooks and workshop materials, holds all copyrights, provides professional development and technical assistance, and sells all books and workshop items that are recommended for the project. For more information, visit the Let's Read Math website or contact Projects in Education.

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