Dear 4th grade math parents,

As we head into the holiday season, I’d like to suggest that you carve out some time to do an activity with your children that will help them learn some of the multiplication facts that are hardest for children to remember.

You may wonder why I’m not just suggesting that you use flash cards to help your child learn these facts. Why? Some students do well with this approach, but many don’t, so it is not always effective. Another reason is that by using flashcards (or timed tests or other drills), we can cause anxiety in some students regarding math. Math anxiety can be an obstacle to being successful in math, so the more we can do to keep math fun and accessible, the better. You can help your child develop a deep understanding of the multiplication facts by encouraging them to use, work with, and explore the numbers they need to learn. The card activity I’ve sent home will help your child do this.

**The aim of this activity is to match cards with the same numerical answer. Start by laying all the cards on a table and ask your child to pick up as many as they find with the same answer (shown through any representation).  Ask your child to tell you how he/she knows that the answers match.**

This activity encourages your child to develop comfort with the multiplication facts and helps them to understand the answer. When you engage in this activity with your child, be lighthearted and encouraging. Congratulate for the successes your child reports and encourage him/her to focus on harder facts each time.

Another great way to support the acquisition of fluency with multiplication and division facts is to practice saying multiples (skip-counting) for the numbers 2 -12. Example: 3-6-9-12-15-18-21-24-27-30-33-36 (adding 3 each time). Students are already quite fluent with 2, 3, 5 and 10 so they should focus on 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12. They can make a number line or a table on paper to list these numbers, but they should also practice out loud without looking at the numbers.

7’s and 12’s can be particularly challenging, so have patience and stick with the practice! As they practice out loud you will both hear which numbers need extra work. We have been working on this in class so your child can demonstrate this activity for you. This practice can be done anywhere/anytime and is really helpful.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about these activities or anything else. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with our young mathematicians thus far this year! Best wishes for a wonderful winter holiday and happy New Year!

Ginny Brown

Math

Practice

Please Read