

# 2nd Grade Parents Go Back To School To Experience The Joys Of Singapore Math!

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Armed with board games, laptops and ActivBoards, Epstein 2nd grade students led their parents through a series of experiential math activities. This fun and engaging morning is a glimpse for parents into the world of 2nd grade math at Epstein...and it is nothing like the math we had growing up!

In Singapore math, the focus is on moving students through a three part learning process, beginning with a concrete representation of a problem (using manipulatives such as cubes), moving toward a pictorial representation (such as bar models and ten frames) to abstract thinking about math (writing the algorithm and solving it). At Epstein, students regularly practice by playing exciting math games that help strengthen their number sense, build fact fluency, reinforce math concepts and develop social skills. These skills are developed at the students' pace because lessons and activities are differentiated in order to personalize the learning process. Students are encouraged to talk about math, to listen to others, and to collaborate in order to discover the many ways one can approach a single problem. This year, we have also increased our ability to differentiate through smaller, more fluid groupings which are based on students' learning styles and skill acquisition.



Additionally, the integration of technology by employing the use of electronic gaming<sup>[1]</sup> via laptops and iPads helps keep student interest and motivation high. An article in <sup>[2]</sup>*Forbes*<sup>[3]</sup> details the research of a variety of studies reviewed by Edward Deci<sup>[4]</sup> (Professor of Psychology and Director of the Human Motivation Program) and colleagues, showing that when students' interest and motivation is high, they score better on tests.<sup>[5]</sup>

In a CNN article written by Bill Jackson, he describes<sup>[6]</sup>, "*Singapore mathematics lessons begin by engaging students in hands-on learning experiences followed by pictorial representations, which help them form a mental image of mathematical concepts. This is followed by an abstract stage, where they solve problems using numbers and symbols. This approach makes the learning of mathematics fun and meaningful, and helps students develop positive attitudes about math.*"

Back<sup>[7]</sup>

#### Links

1. <http://www.nyu.edu/about/news-publications/news/2013/11/06/educational-video-games-can-boost-motivation-to-learn-nyu-cuny-study-shows-.html>

2. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesmarshallcrotty/2013/03/13/motivation-matters-40-of-high-school-students-chronically-disengaged-from-school/>
3. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesmarshallcrotty/2013/03/13/motivation-matters-40-of-high-school-students-chronically-disengaged-from-school/>
4. <http://deci.socialpsychology.org/>
5. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesmarshallcrotty/2013/03/13/motivation-matters-40-of-high-school-students-chronically-disengaged-from-school/>
6. <http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2012/10/10/my-view-americas-students-can-benefit-from-singapore-math/>
7. `javascript:window.history.back();`