

Math Lab Newsletter

S.C. Red Elementary

4520 Tonawanda Drive, Houston, TX 77035

Maxie Hollingsworth, Math Lab Specialist



Dear Math Parent:

December is a terrific month to learn more about the different cultural holidays that Red Elementary School families celebrate. I enjoy looking at world calendars to learn about wacky holidays such as *Humbug Day* on December 21. Explore some unique holidays and traditions with your kids. Or, visit a public library and check out some holiday books for the whole family to enjoy!

It is tempting to allow children to play on tablets, computers and smartphones for hours at a time, especially during long holiday breaks. The American Academy of Pediatrics is a special organization of doctors who focus on the health and well-being of children. They suggest that families focus on physical play, rest, and face-to-face conversations with friends and family to support good social skills and mental health. Think carefully about the age, interests, and needs of your whole family. Keep in mind that an adult should regularly check the websites, online games, and phone apps that children under the age of 18 use. Just as you would limit the amount of junk food that your children eat, set daily limits for the amount of time they spend on technology and electronic gadgets. Encourage your children to watch quality programs, to read, play outdoors, or help make a holiday treat. Whatever way your family celebrates the holidays, make it special!

Please email questions or feedback about this newsletter to mhollin1@houstonisd.org.

Maxie Hollingsworth,

S.C. Red Elementary Math Lab

It's always time for math! 😊



Interesting Dates & Facts

December 15

Bill of Rights Day

December 21

Winter Solstice

Crossword Puzzle Day

December 22

Hanukkah

December 25

Christmas

December 26

Kwanzaa

Math-Themed Books!

Cool books with math themes to enjoy with your children:

***The Deep, Deep Puddle* by Mary Jessie Parker (Ages 3 – 6)**

Kids will enjoy counting forward and backward in this fantasy story about a puddle that keeps growing.

***My Full Moon Is Square* by Elinor J. Pinczes (Ages 6 – 9)**

A group of fireflies help a frog read a story at night by forming number patterns in the night sky.

***The Fishy Fountain* by Melinda Thielbar (Ages 8 – 11)**

Stacy and her friends from Kung Fu school use math skills to solve a mystery in the school science lab.

Visit the Houston Public Library to find these books and more:

<http://houstonlibrary.org/>

Holiday Reindeer Games

Roll and Flip (PK – K)

Materials: Dice, paper cut into 2 inch squares, pen or marker

Directions: Cut a sheet of paper into 12 squares. Write the numbers 1 – 12 on the square papers. Spread out the numbered squares in number order or randomly. Roll the die or dice, find the number on the matching square and flip it over. For a little extra fun, sing or chant “Happy New Year” or another silly phrase the number of times shown on the dice.

Candy Cane Symmetry (PK – 5)

Materials: Bag of small or large candy canes or other candy, construction paper, glue or tape, pencil or marker, ruler or long straight object.

Directions: Fold a sheet of construction paper player in half either vertically or horizontally. Draw a dark line down the middle of the paper. Arrange the candy canes along the line to form a mirror image on both sides of the paper.

North Pole Notes (4th – 5th)

Did you know that male & female reindeer grow antlers that shed each year? North American reindeer, called caribou, live in herds of 10 - 1,000! Calculate how many antlers you’d find in a herd. Reindeer antlers can range up to 53” long and 39” wide. Find the area of reindeer antlers.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) has offered a Santa Claus tracking map to help people follow Santa’s route around the world on Christmas Eve. Children can learn to read a map, count the time zones & more! <https://www.noradsanta.org/>

Q: Where do math teachers go on vacation?

A: To Times Square.

Online Resources

<http://www.jokes4us.com/miscellaneousjokes/mathjokes>

Words to Know:

number order (putting numbers in their correct order from least to greatest)

calculate (use math to determine the amount or number of something)

estimate (a close guess of the actual amount or value of something)

symmetry (when one shape becomes exactly like another if you flip, slide or turn it)



Candy Cane Symmetry pictures.

Helpful Tips

Math is everywhere! The holidays are a great time to explore math in festive ways. Walk around your neighborhood and count the holiday cheer. Make predictions or estimations about the number of homes and businesses in your community with holiday decorations. Tally and compare the number of homes with decorations to the number of homes that are not decorated. Children with more advanced math ability can identify the fraction or calculate the percentage of decorated homes in your neighborhood. Reinforce early math skills by sorting homes based on the color, shapes and patterns of holiday lights. Count presents, tree ornaments and candles kindled on the menorah or kinara. Identify shapes, colors and patterns in wrapping paper. Older children can measure the sides of presents and find the area (length x width), perimeter (length of all sides), and volume (length x width x height) as you wrap them together. Keep a calendar or graph to count down (backwards) towards a special holiday or family celebration this month. However your family celebrates the holidays, finding the math in everything will strengthen your child’s math skills and their relationship with you! 😊

Sources: Math Game Time, Education World

Math Joke of the Month

“The Book of Nature is written in mathematical language.” - Galileo

A talking sheepdog corrals all the sheep into the pen for his farmer.

The dog returns and says, "Okay farmer, all 40 sheep are accounted for."