



# MATH IS ALL AROUND US

The World is a Mathematics Playground

## Shapes

Look for shapes in the world around you.

- In the home . . . boxes, containers, furniture, toys, windows, etc.
- In nature . . . trees, bushes, plants, etc.
- Take a shape walk. Look for shapes in the interplay of wires and buildings, playground equipment, clouds in the sky. Shapes are all around us.

## Kitchen

Allow your child to help in the kitchen. Children love to help measure and cook. Teach your child to help set the table. How many people are in our family? How many forks do we need? Grandma and grandpa are coming for dinner. How many more forks do we need?

## Books

Put a new twist on the books your child has memorized. Begin to ask questions about the pictures or story. How many? Who was bigger/taller? Who was smaller/shorter? What shape is it . . . ?

## Laundry

Have your child help sort and fold laundry. Shapes can be identified in the folded clothes. Compare the piles of clothes. Who has the biggest pile? Smallest? Introduce your child to the word fewer and its meaning. Laundry can be sorted by size, function (what is it used for?) or who it belongs to.

# Sorting

Lots of everyday objects can be used in a sorting activity. Buttons, bottle caps, spools of thread, items from the junk drawer, toys.

# Estimation

Package of M & Ms - How many are in the package? How many are red? Green? Blue? Will toys fit in a box? Have different sized and shaped boxes. Can you put more water in one than the other? Which do you think will hold more?

Talk with your child. Use math vocabulary. Bigger, smaller, tallest, shortest, most, least, greatest, fewest, etc. Describe everything to your children. Keep it simple for the very young child. Use more describing words as he/she gets older.

Numbers have a meaning. Show your child what four (4) really is. Encourage his/her number sense. Make a salt box. Put salt in a shoe box. Let your child trace shapes and numbers in the salt.

When you sit and cut coupons, allow your child to cut pictures of food, clothing or toys. These pictures can be used by your child to help you make a shopping list or for a sorting activity.

# Problem Solving

From a very young age, children become problem solvers. The first time your child makes a choice he/she has solved a problem. Selecting an outfit, what to eat or what toy to play with involve choices and decision making. *Do not challenge* the choice but try to lead your child to discover their thought processes.

# Clocks

Both digital and standard clocks have an important place in our world. Children can get practice in identifying numbers when reading a digital clock or looking at a standard clock. Expose your child to real expanses of time. Use a timer to experience what a real minute is as compared to our "in a minute" minute.

Most importantly, spend time with your child. You are your child's first teacher. Try to incorporate a sharing of the math in your world with your child on a daily basis. The more often you do this the easier it will become and you and your child will indeed discover that the world is a *mathematics playground!*