

Formula Fridays

January 31, 2014 (For Every Week Until February 28, 2014)

As we continue with measurement, students are using multiplication even more in class. We're starting our unit on multiplication soon, and in order to do more complicated multiplication questions, students need to know and understand their basic facts.

For the next month, please spend some time every week working on multiplication with your child. There are many ways to do this:

- 1) Prodigy Game – You were emailed the username and password. Just let me know if you need this information again. Questions have been assigned to the students to use for practice.
- 2) Online Games – Type “multiplication games” into Google, and there are a large number of possible website options. You can use these games to review the facts.
- 3) Card Games – Have your child pick two cards, three cards, or four cards, and practice multiplying using the numbers. Depending on your child's comfort with multiplication, you could try one-digit by one-digit, two-digits by one-digit, or two-digits by two-digits.
- 4) Dice Games – Use the same ideas as the card games, but this time with dice. Children love rolling dice. Get them to use the dice to create numbers, and then start multiplying.
- 5) Create some real world problems. I'm a big believer in learning math in real contexts. Think of times together that you might use multiplication in real life. Then use these contexts to create some of your own problems to solve. Pick different values and start multiplying. Get your child to explain all of his/her thinking while also showing all of his/her work.
- 6) The Newspaper – There are tons of different numbers in the newspaper, and many of these numbers connect to great real world contexts for multiplication. Look at flyers, car or home prices, sports scores, or stocks, and start multiplying and sharing multiplication thinking in different ways.
- 7) Playing With Manipulatives – Even more than memorized facts, I want students to understand what multiplication means and the different ways they can solve problems. Manipulatives (any items) are great for this. When looking at problems together, get your child to explain what the question means (e.g., 5×10 means 5 groups of 10 or 5, 10 times), and then represent the question using manipulatives. Your child can then share how he/she got the total. Skip counting is also connected to multiplication, and this activity may help your child with skip counting. As your child works more with these kinds of activities, he/she is sure to memorize/learn more of the facts.

Each week, get your child to write down what he/she did to work on multiplication. If you thought of a new game/activity that worked well, let me know, and I'll share it on the blog for others to see. Then every Monday, we'll be devoting class time to multiplication: using a combination of fact recall, games, and real world problems. Let the fun begin! ☺