

“Math is stupid. I hate it. I’m never going to need this stuff.”

I’m guilty of having uttered each of these sentences in my life. Math was always a struggle for me, much to the dismay of my father. He was a virtual human calculator who dealt with complicated math equations in his daily life as a banker/financial advisor. Like most fathers, he looked forward to his children following in his mathematical footsteps. It wasn’t to be.

Now, in my day-to-day life words are of my most-used tools. Regardless of the profession that I chose, I still use math every day.

- In cooking: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup is smaller than $\frac{1}{3}$ of a cup
- In Shopping: How much is 35% off of \$29.99?
- In baking: Cook a 10 lb turkey at 45 minutes per pound...
- In Decorating: How much carpet do I need to cover the floor of my living room?

As it turns out, I did need this stuff. The teachers were right.

I wish that I had paid better attention in math class. Despite being a relatively good student, the further that I got in school, the less that math made sense to me.

Thankfully, my proficiency in other subjects was apparent (hello, writer’s craft), so I could get by without having top marks in math.

But that doesn’t mean that I ever gave up trying to get better math marks. I knew my multiplication tables inside and out, thanks to flash cards and a variety of unique learning techniques. I may have been able to recite my times tables, but I never really understood them.

It’s been years since my father and I butted heads about math homework but unfortunately, not much has changed. Math is still a struggle for parents and kids because many kids still don’t get math.

It’s not because the curriculum is too hard, or the teachers are ineffective. Some kids struggle with math simply because the basic concepts of math are not relevant or meaningful to the student.

And when students don’t have a fundamental understanding of the concepts, they rely on memorization to get by.

Some kids get math naturally, and others don’t. Those that don’t, have to work harder to develop a better understanding of math basics. If your child is not a natural math learner, then the struggle is trying to



help your child find the link that to the real world that will make math meaningful and relevant. It's a process that can take year, but its one that is well worth it, because math doesn't end when school does. Math has practical applications in everyday life. When the light bulb finally goes on for your child and math begins to makes sense, the struggles begin to slip away...

What do you do to make math meaningful for your child? We'd love to hear from you.

