



JEI

EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

December 2013
Volume 1, Issue 3

The Common Core: Math

In the last newsletter, we looked at the changes of the Common Core's English curriculum. For this month, we will focus on the math curriculum.

As mentioned in the October issue, the U.S. math curriculum has been criticized because it is too broad and scattered. Thus, the Common Core places an emphasis on fewer topics but delves deeper into each. The common core math standards are based on three principles: 1) evidence-based, 2) rigorous contents and skills, and 3) aligned with college and work expectations.

Common core places many new expectations on students at an early age. Students should be able to show strong evidence in order to support their answers. This helps students develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. Making conjectures about form, as well as the meaning of the solution are required, rather than simply jumping into a solution attempt. Students should check their answers to problems using a different method, and they

continually ask themselves, "Does this make sense?" For example, students in 3rd grade will be asked this kind of question: *Recognize and generate simple equivalent fractions, e.g., $1/2 = 2/4$; $4/6 = 2/3$. Explain why the fractions are equivalent.* The students need to provide their answer with supporting evidence such as using a visual fraction model.

The new curriculum contains rigorous contents and skills. The instructions focus on the concepts so that students can gain strong conceptual understanding. It leads students to communicate to others by using clear definitions and carefully formulated explanations. Also, students are expected to find out the pattern or structure by observing the calculations. For example, in 1st grade, students will be asked to determine the unknown number that makes the equation true such as the following: $8 + ? = 11$; $5 = ? - 3$. Students are able to understand not only the concepts of addition and subtraction, but also the relationship between them, rather than just adding or subtracting.

(continued on page 3)

What's Inside

Editor's Column

What Happened to My Sweet Child?

Briefs & Fast Facts

Video Game Teaches Kids Ethics
The Christmas Budget

JEI Essay Contest 2013

Successfully held on Nov. 9!



At the contest venue in Great Neck, NY

JEI Essay Contest

More than 300 essays
were submitted

(Read about it on page 4)

What Happened to My Sweet Child?

By Gil Choi

“I don’t know what happened. He was very well-behaved when he was younger.”

“She did really well in school when she was younger.”

“She was so sweet when she was little.”

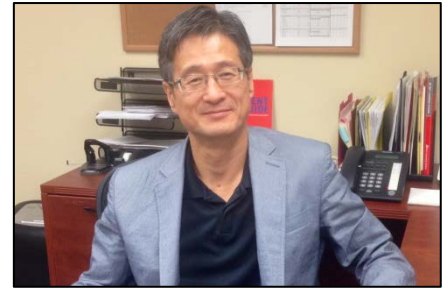
These are some of the laments I hear often from parents. So what is happening to our children when they reach those dreaded teenage years or even sooner these days? Have they really become monsters? Well, not really. Some of it may have to do with the hormonal imbalance, but mostly, it is just a part of growing up.

Yes, children are sweet and obedient, and mostly do as they are told when they are little. They hug and cling to you, and think the world of you, often claiming proudly, “My dad said...” or “My mom said...” This, of course, is natural. We have taken care of them from the moment they are born; we fed them, helped them walk and learn the language, and much more. We are the whole world to them for the first dozen or so years. Then they go to school

and start saying something like, “Well, my teacher said...” That may be the first moment they question your knowledge or authority. Soon enough, those teenage years come, and now you don’t know much at all or you have become materialistic and indifferent.

I understand many parents struggle with this, as I struggled with it at one point too. So let me ask you a question. Do you still consider yourself your parent’s son or daughter? My guess is probably not. We were all someone’s children at some point — and still are in some ways — but we have since become our own men or women. We have our own set of values, thoughts, and ideas, some of which may be similar to our parents but still our own.

The teenage years really are a transition period from childhood to adulthood. When our children disagree with us or talk back to us, it isn’t necessarily a bad thing. Our children are just trying to come into their own, which is exactly what we want them to do. Our job as parents is to help nurture and guide our children so that they can stand on their own someday. We want them to



Gil Choi, Senior Vice President of JEI Self-Learning Systems, Inc.

become a valuable member of a society with a good set of morals and values.

So how do we get through those teenage years? For one thing, communicate. Give them reasons for your actions and words so that they understand you. If they don’t understand or agree with something, they may not say it now – when they are small and fragile – but they will definitely let you know later. As for instilling good values and work ethic, it will not be done in the teenage years when they have begun to question your knowledge and authority. It needs to be done much earlier when they actually listen to you. So view your children as adults-in-waiting even when they are very little, and earn their respect.

JEI FACEBOOK FAN GIVEAWAY

Thank you everyone

for participating in our drawing

that ended on November 26, 2013.

See who won the Apple iPad mini at

<https://www.facebook.com/jeilearningcenter>

Stay tuned for future Facebook promotions!



Briefs

Better Behavior With More Sleep



Kids who get the right amount of sleep do not overeat, which reduces the chance of becoming overweight. Responsible is the hormone Leptin that regulates hunger. Getting sleeping patterns right has advantages that will carry on well into the child's adulthood, whereas distractions in the bedroom that are of electronic nature negatively affect the kid's general health. A study by the University College of London showed that fixed bedtimes and plenty of sleep also lead to well-behaved and happy kids that are less likely to act out in school. (Parent News 11/2013)

New Video Game, Common Core Style

MIT's Education Arcade and the Learning Games Network have jointly developed a free video game, *Quandary*, that will engage kids to start thinking. It teaches ethics while aligning with Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts for 3rd through 8th graders. Students will understand how to take a different perspective and learn how to empathize.

(www.educationnews.org, 11/2013)

7 States Fighting to Keep Cursive Writing

As the new Common Core Standards require computing skills for assessments, many schools have dropped penmanship classes. CA, ID, IN, KS, MA, NC, and UT want their schools to keep cursive writing in classrooms since cursive conveys intelligence and grace. It also engages creativity and builds brain cells.

(www.educationnews.org, 11/2013)

(continued from page 1)

Another major change is where students have the ability to apply mathematics to solve problems outside the classroom like in everyday life, in society, and at the workplace. In early grades, this can be demonstrated by writing an addition equation to describe a situation (e.g., There are 5 cats. 2 more cats come. How many are there in all?). In middle school grades, a student might apply proportional reasoning to plan a school event or analyze a problem in the community (e.g., *Your school is going to have a fundraiser next month. You want to raise a minimum of \$5,000 and you estimate between 100 and 120 people to attend. How much would you charge per ticket?*). By high school, a student might use geometry to solve a design problem or use a function to describe how one quantity of interest depends on another.

Additionally, students are able to use technological tools to deepen their understanding of concepts such as a ruler, protractor, spreadsheet, or a computer algebra system. For example, students can be asked: *Find the width of a rectangular room given the area of the flooring and the length, by viewing the area formula as a multiplication equation with an unknown factor* (Grade 4). Or: *For an account balance of -30 dollars, write $|-30| = 30$ to describe the size of the debt in dollars* (Grade 6).

Overall, the common core math standards require students to develop higher-level thinking skills by understanding concepts and applying them to their everyday life. Therefore, now it's time for students to change their way of learning from "How fast can I solve this question?" to "How well do I understand the concept and how well can I explain it in this question?"

THE CHRISTMAS BUDGET



JEI Held Its First Essay Contest on Nov 9, 2013

More than 300 contestants in grades 2 to 7 participated at the 2013 JEI Essay Contest.

The event was held at 4 major locations in Fremont (CA), Los Angeles (CA), North Brunswick (NJ), Great Neck (NY), and at certain JEI Learning Centers throughout the United States. While students were writing their essays, hundreds of parents attended a parent seminar which discussed the Common Core State Standards– presently the most important and widely discussed topic in education.

The essay submissions will be judged on content, organization, conventions, vocabulary, and voice in a fair and unbiased evaluation process at the Los Angeles Headquarters. Winners will receive prizes and plaques, and an Apple iPad will go out to the grand prize winner. Other prizes include six Samsung Galaxy Tabs, six \$100 Barnes & Noble gift cards, and six \$50 Barnes & Noble gift cards. Please

stay tuned– all winners will be announced on December 9, 2013 on the website www.jeilearning.com.

In the meantime, feel free to take

a look at the pictures from the contest on JEI's Facebook page www.facebook.com/jeilearningcenter. JEI would like to thank everyone for making this event a successful one!



In Great Neck, NY



In Los Angeles, CA



The young writers in Northern California after the contest.

www.jeilearning.com

Headquarters

Los Angeles, CA
Englewood Cliffs, NJ

Centers

CA

Arcadia
Cerritos
Chico
Chula Vista
Cupertino
Encinitas
Fremont
East Fremont
Fullerton
Irvine

La Crescenta
LA Mid-Wilshire
LA Wilton
Newark
Pleasanton
San Diego
South San Jose
Union City
Valencia
Walnut Creek

GA

Suwanee

IL

Schaumburg

MA

Burlington

NJ

Bedminster
North Brunswick
Cherry Hills
Closter
Cresskill-Tenafly
North Edison
Edison-Piscataway
Franklin Park
Fort Lee
Hillsborough
Marlboro
Matawan
Montgomery
Paramus

Princeton Junction
East Rutherford
Waldwick
Warren
Wayne

NY

Auburndale
Bayside
Bensonhurst
Flushing
Flushing Mall
Fresh Meadows
Great Neck
Herricks
Latham

Merrick
Rego Park

PA

Allentown
Quakertown

TX

Austin
Katy-Richmond

Canada

Calgary
Coquitlam
Edmonton
Richmond Hill
Weston
Toronto
North Vancouver
Vancouver