

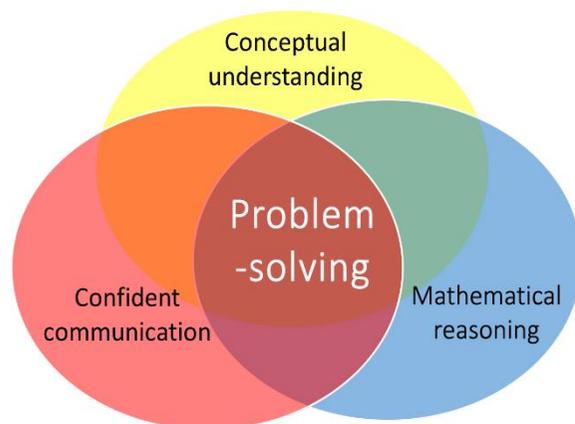
NATURE OF THE ACTIVITIES SUGGESTED HERE

With the surge of interest and sometimes confused interpretations of what is meant by **Mastery** in mathematics, a number of different claims have been made about what it means and what is required. The efficacy of different approaches to implementing a Mastery approach to learning mathematics in the primary school, as demonstrated by higher performing jurisdictions in the Far East, as measured by PISA* and TMSS* have been questioned and challenged.

However, there are some essential points which appear to be in common when examining different approaches.

Research in mathematics education, which curriculum developers and educationalists in the Far East have used, have been known for many years and including Bloom's* theories of *Mastery*, the development of *deeper conceptual understanding* through a progression in *Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract (CPA)* experiences, first discovered by Bruner*, the *realistic mathematics education* of Freudenthal*, and the seminal *Cockcroft Report**, particularly, its emphasis on the importance of *practical experiences* and *problem-solving*. More recently, Lo's* research in the subject of *Variation Theory* has been prominent in exploring how to plan learning for understanding through small steps in conceptual and procedural variation when teaching.

All of these principles have informed the sample of activities presented here. Proponents of Mastery in mathematics (e.g. Drury*) also argue that teaching and learning must focus on enabling children to develop **rich connections** between different facets of their mathematical experience and learning. These aims are also highlighted in the 2014 National Curriculum Aims*. The diagram below shows how these facets are all inter-related, and how teaching to connect these is crucial to **deeper mathematical learning**.



Hence, the activities suggested here are designed to promote the following:

- practical activity manipulating concrete resources where possible;
- working in pairs or groups to encourage the confident use of the language of mathematics through explanation and reasoning with other children;
- ensuring that formal written arithmetic develops from secure experiences with concrete, visual and mental understanding of the manipulation of number and the arithmetic operations;
- solving problems (or by playing games) with the potential for a useful or pleasing result;
- opportunities for finding more than one acceptable result, which children can compare and discuss through collaboration or (guided) peer-assessment.

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There is an expectation that discussion and exploration of misconceptions or errors is a healthy and productive feature of the classroom and that children are encouraged to explain their thinking and listen to others.

In some of the activities, it could be argued that a written sheet of exercises could be given to produce similar results. However, the use of concrete apparatus and visual images provides a medium for discussion and helps to establish a rich conceptual understanding which is often insufficiently developed through an abstract engagement with written exercises alone. In other cases, children are using equipment to generate the problem to be solved, so can be more engaged in its solution.

Where it is suggested pairs or groups of children work together, the groups may of course be varied to suit the teacher's own judgement. For example, in a game intended for pairs, an odd number of children can be accommodated by a changing combination of 2 vs 1.

To make it more accessible when reading the description of the activities, children's names have been used to identify the sequence of interactions between learners working in pairs or groups.

For every activity, it is paramount that the teacher teaches by modelling the activity with the class, so that children see and imitate what they need to do. Simply providing a written instruction sheet or verbal series of instructions is insufficient for the children to understand and engage with most activities.

Each activity has suggestions for extending or simplification. The expectation is that each can be explored comprehensively within one classroom lesson of 45 minutes or more.

For more information about improving the capacity for teaching and learning mathematics in the primary school, visit www.MathematicsMastered.org

*References

Bloom, B. S. (1971) 'Mastery learning', in J. H. Block (ed.), *Mastery Learning: Theory and Practice*, New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Bruner, J. S. (1960) *The Process of Education*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

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NATURE OF THE ACTIVITIES SUGGESTED HERE

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Lo, M. L. (2012) *Variation Theory and the Improvement of Teaching and Learning*, Gothenburg studies in educational sciences 323, Gothenburg University.

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Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), [International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)]

10. Multiplication and Division Structures

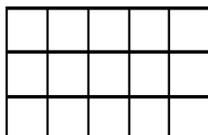
Recall multiplication and division facts for multiplication tables up to 12×12 .

Recognise and use factor pairs and commutativity in mental calculations.

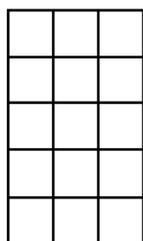
Practice of multiplication facts can be limited to chanting and it is important that children can recall and manipulate these facts beyond a memorised sequence. This activity is designed to require a more 'ad hoc' recall of multiplication facts, without practice calculations.

Arrayed in Splendour: The aim here is for children to explore and practise their use of multiplication facts, which is a helpful means of memorising them. The children are given a series of numbers. For each number, they need to draw, on squared paper, as many rectangles, as possible that represent the number, and write the corresponding multiplication fact.

For example, for 15:



$$3 \times 5 = 15$$



$$5 \times 3 = 15$$



$$1 \times 15 = 15$$



$$15 \times 1 = 15$$

Shelley and Rohan complete this individually then compare and justify their outcomes for a range of numbers, for example: 24, 29, 32, 36, 39, 40, 45, 49, 72. Have any possibilities been omitted? Are any rectangles incorrect?

To simplify this, choose numbers within tables they can look up.

To extend the children challenge them with numbers that appear in multiplication tables they have not yet learned.

Higher attainers may write the multiplication facts without drawing the rectangles, but how do they justify their answer to their partner?

Children should understand why some of the rectangles are squares.

Children should recognise why some numbers can only be represented by just 2 complementary rectangles – as a single row and a single column, and see this as visual evidence for prime numbers.

The children should recognise and write the complementary division facts for the numbers.