

What do parents/guardians need to know about Numeracy?

This learning guide is designed for use by parents/guardians as a self-paced study to explore numeracy. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to use this learning guide as a discussion starter at a School Council Meeting, Parent Information Event, or other school community event.



This Learning Guide is intended for use after viewing the Alberta Education video clip [Numeracy: A World to Investigate](#)

Numeracy is more than mathematics—it is about using and applying mathematics to real life situations. Numeracy is a life skill that involves having the confidence and capability to use numbers and think mathematically in everyday life. Strong numeracy is critical to success.

Key ideas:

- Being numerate means going beyond the basic skills involved in solving simple arithmetic problems, to acquiring, creating, connecting and understanding a wide variety of types of information.
- Numeracy means being capable in both quantitative (numerical) and spatial (three-dimensional) reasoning.
- Numeracy means confidently and effectively handling everyday life situations like managing money, understanding interest, using timetables, and interpreting graphs and charts—in other words, living in the modern world.
- It is important to have a positive attitude toward numeracy. Students who 'hate' classroom math often cannot see its connection to the numeracy requirements of the real world, or to the math that is used in many professions every day, such as by pipefitters, accountants, retail managers, physicists, carpenters, engineers and computer programmers.
- Students need opportunities to use numeracy knowledge and skills in all subjects to master and efficiently transfer them from one context to another.
- All students are capable of developing numeracy. Teachers use a broad, inclusive approach to teaching numeracy to meet the wide range of individual learners' needs.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

- How do the examples in the video challenge or affirm what you know about numeracy?
- What are the characteristics of a person who has good numeracy skills?
- Numeracy is foundational to all learning. How does this impact the role of a teacher?
- How might a broader understanding of numeracy impact your role as a parent?

For more information:

[Literacy and Numeracy](#) (Alberta Education)

[The Power of Asking Good Questions: Creating a Culture of Critical Thinking](#) with Keith Van De Keere and Debbie Duvall (ERLC)

[National Numeracy Toolkit](#)

My Child's Learning: A Parent Resource
www.learnalberta.ca/content/mychildslearning/

Alberta School Council Association
www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca

Your child's teacher and school principal are also a valuable source of information.

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