

How to Use This Resource



VIDEO CLIP Introduction



This introductory video clip gives glimpses of math workshop happening in grades K–5. As you watch the clip, consider these questions:

- What do you see happening that indicates math workshop is part of these classes?
 - What is familiar to you?
- What surprises you?
 - What do you have questions about?



To view this video clip, scan the QR code or access via mathsolutions.com/mathworkshopintro

What Is Math Workshop?

Math workshop is a model of instruction that allows all students to be engaged in the mathematics classroom—and for all students to realize their abilities as mathematicians. Math workshop is more of a philosophy than a lesson plan template. However, included in this resource are lesson plan examples and templates that will help you visualize what this will look like in your own classroom. Math workshop includes accessible mathematical tasks, open-ended problem solving, small-group instruction, student choice, and time for practice of important concepts throughout the year. All of this occurs in a way that makes mathematics enjoyable and meaningful for students and teachers.

Why Math Workshop?

During math workshop, supporting all levels of student thinking is purposeful and plentiful—and is at the center of the entire philosophy of math workshop. In math workshop, differentiation doesn't just happen for students who are considered mathematically gifted or for students with special needs. Differentiation is for everyone, and this differentiated instruction is

For more on the what and why of math workshop, see Chapter I.

what allows our core instruction to be successful. Still not convinced? Math workshop is fun! Students like it. Teachers like it. It is a better way to spend time learning about mathematics content. As you read through this resource, you will see many ways in which math workshop will increase engagement and decrease anxiety. It saves time for teachers, provides teachers with more understanding of what their students understand, and makes learning math enjoyable and accessible.

Why This Resource?

When looking for resources to support reading and writing workshop, the options are countless. However, there seem to be fewer options for math workshop. Even as I scan my shelf of “go-to” resources, I find that many of my favorite titles focus on a component of learning stations or guided math groups. Each of these components has an important role in math workshop; however, I have found that it is a challenge implementing them without knowing the “whole picture” of a math workshop first. This resource does just that—providing five accessible steps to successfully implement all of (not just a part of) math workshop. It is intended to support you in your teaching and your thinking, ensuring that you are not alone in trying to determine how to make your math class the best it can be.

How This Resource Is Organized

Step 1: Understand Math Workshop

Chapter 1 is the first exciting step. This chapter gives you a quick overview of the *what*, *why*, and *when* of math workshop. Adult learners often need to understand why changes are happening. If that describes you, then this is a chapter that you will not want to miss. If you work in a school where you have to convince your administrator, your teammates, or parents why your mathematics instruction is looking different, then pull from this chapter to help make your case. This chapter provides the big picture—the one that you and your teammates will want to read in order to have a common understanding.

Step 2: Prepare Your Students for Math Workshop

Chapter 2 offers ideas and suggestions for how to set up your classroom—and your classroom culture—to begin math workshop. It is highly recommended that you read this chapter prior to implementing math workshop. It

includes a section titled “Twenty Days to a Classroom Culture That Works,” which introduces minilessons that support the communication and practice of expectations surrounding the workshop model. Facilitating these lessons and revisiting them when needed ensures that your students are well prepared for math workshop.

Step 3: Decide Your Math Workshop Structure

As stated previously, math workshop is a philosophy rather than a lesson plan template. The flexibility within the workshop model supports differentiation and allows you to make educated instructional decisions about what your students need most. **Chapters 3, 4, and 5** describe and compare the three different structures of math workshop: Task and Share (Chapter 3); Focus Lesson, Guided Math, and Learning Stations (Chapter 4); Guided Math and Learning Stations (Chapter 5). These chapters offer ideas to help you organize your math class in a meaningful and engaging way while making the most of the time that you have.

Reflect on It!

As you delve into this resource, look for how the philosophy of math workshop connects to your own philosophy for teaching mathematics. How is your current structure similar to math workshop? How is it different? You no doubt already have good things going on in your classroom. Make those connections! By implementing math workshop you are not changing your entire system for teaching mathematics. Rather, you are making modifications to improve your students’ learning experience. At the end of most chapters, there are reflective questions. Use these questions to help make connections to your current work, reflect on what changes you may want to consider, and/or prompt meaningful discussions in study groups.

Step 4: Facilitate Your Math Workshop

Math workshop, regardless of the structure you are using, is made up of several components. **Chapter 6** offers various number sense routines to help you start each math class in an engaging and accessible way. These routines are

But It's Just Me . . .

You can do this solo. Math workshop is doable even if you don't have a team of teachers with whom to work. However, like any teaching practice, the opportunity to collaborate makes it even better.

often students' first impression of math class, and this chapter will help you to make that first impression a positive one.

Chapter 7 addresses engaging and meaningful learning stations. It discusses the importance of quality stations and choice, as well as ways to manage your classroom so that learning stations do not wreak havoc and disrupt instructional time.

Chapter 8 goes into detail about guided math groups. Often, the term *guided math* is used to describe an entire structure. This resource introduces guided math as one of the several important components of math workshop.

Student reflection is an important component of math workshop, and it is a component that easily gets overlooked in many math classes due to time. **Chapter 9** offers ideas for reflection opportunities that can transpire in a short amount of time and simultaneously provide the teacher with much needed information.

Chapter 10 brings the components and structures of math workshop together to show ways to make successful instructional decisions. A *Getting Started Checklist* ensures that you have considered the necessary actions to take in order to begin math workshop in your classroom. You will also find a sample lesson for how to first start so that you can “Go Slow to Go Fast!”

Step 5: Reflect On and Refine Your Math Workshop

In this section you'll find additional support critical to your use of math workshop. I like to think of these chapters as your own personal “instructional coach.” When in doubt, turn to these chapters to think about things differently or find answers to your questions. You'll likely return to these chapters time and time again as you progress in making math workshop your own. **Chapter 11** has reflective questions to consider whether you are implementing math workshop solo, with a team, or as a whole school. You will also find suggested action steps to choose from, especially when you are feeling stuck or unsure of where to go next. **Chapter 12** is in the form of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). These were collected from my own experiences and the experiences of other teachers who have made a commitment to teach using math workshop.

Reproducibles

Downloadable reproducible templates are included for your use as you implement math workshop with students. These tools are provided to save you time. Use them in their original format or tweak them to make them your own. Download them at: www.mathsolutions.com/mathworkshopreproducibles.

How This Resource Is Meant to Be Read

This resource can be read from cover to cover. However, if you are reading this, then you are probably a teacher, instructional coach, or principal. You likely do not have the time to read this or anything else—especially if you are in the middle of a school year. This is one of the reasons that this resource breaks the information down into accessible, manageable steps. I get it! I know firsthand how busy you are. Rest assured, this resource will be well worth your time and will support you with the planning and the teaching of mathematics.

If you make the time to read this and implement the structures of math workshop, then you will gain time later. Math workshop is not only best for students; it is best for teachers, saving you time in the future. Math workshop makes teaching, planning, and learning easier in the end. It really does! As you read this and begin to make changes to your mathematics instruction, you may find it challenging at first. However, it will not take long for you to fall madly in love with math workshop. Your passion for mathematics will in turn be contagious in your classroom, and you will see a difference in your students' passion for learning mathematics. Math workshop is a game changer—for teachers and for students.

There Is No Time Like the Present!

I've read countless books on teaching over the years. I am always inspired as I read them and excited about the new possibilities for my classroom and for my school. When I finish a book, I put it in a "special" pile (on average about eight books high) categorized as "ideas to consider for next year." I've learned, however, that "next year" never really comes. Well, it does—but in the chaos that is a part of every start to a new year, that pile of ideas is forgotten. Is this something you can relate to?

I'm going to think optimistically and believe that you are already convinced that math workshop is going to be your new vehicle for math instruction in your classroom. Or, at the bare minimum, you think it is at least worth a try. If this is the case, I simply ask that you don't wait until next year to get started. Start today. Start now. Give it a shot. You won't regret it!

Streaming Video Clips

One of the best parts about this resource is that it includes authentic video clips of teachers and students in action. Seeing clips of actual teachers and students engaged in math workshop is the next best thing to observing the model in a classroom. These video clips help bring the words within the corresponding chapters to life. Note that the filming of these clips transpired in October. This should be encouraging; you too can have math workshop up and running within just one month of school! In addition, the teachers in these clips have between one and four years of experience with using math workshop in their classrooms. So you can rest easy knowing that while your first few math workshop lessons may look pretty messy, it won't take long for you to look and feel like an expert!

How to Access Online Video Clips

Readers have several options for accessing the video clips. Either scan the QR code (with a QR code reader app of your choice) that appears within the video clip section in the text or enter the corresponding URLs in your browser. If you would like to access all the clips at once, follow these instructions:

1. Go to mathsolutions.com/myvideos and click or tap the Create New Account button at the bottom of the Log In form.
2. Create an account, even if you have created one with the Math Solutions bookstore. You will receive a confirmation email when your account has been created.
3. Once your account has been created, you will be taken to the Product Registration page. Click Register on the product you would like to access (in this case, *Math Workshop*).
4. Enter key code and click or tap the Submit Key Code button.
5. Click or tap the Complete Registration button.
6. To access videos at any time, visit your account page.

Quick Start!

Limited on time such that even getting through this “How to Use This Resource” section is challenging? I hear you and your need for a quick start. In a nutshell:

- Even if it is well into the school year and students are all getting along great as respectful community members, it is important to develop a sense of *mathematics community*. Do not pass over introducing the minilessons found in **Chapter 2**; they are critical to introducing the expectations of math workshop and developing your classroom culture.
- Select one of the three structures of math workshop (see **Chapters 3–5**) that is most similar to how you already teach. By choosing a structure that is similar to your own, you will more easily find connections.
- Let the magic begin! Observe, observe, observe. Then, reflect, reflect, reflect! Following the lesson, determine what went well and where students struggled. Use the reflection questions found in **Chapter 11** or consider the questions at the end of each chapter.

But . . . Go Slow to Go Fast!

Throughout my years of teaching and coaching, the message *Go Slow to Go Fast!* has become my mantra—and I think it’s an important reminder after having just read the section titled “Quick Start.”

As excited as you may be about getting started in using math workshop, I caution you to take it slowly. Start today, but don’t change everything all at once. If you do and something fails, you won’t know what piece of the change is causing the struggle. In the beginning of the school year we spend so much time on establishing systems and routines for turning in work, going to the restroom, walking to the cafeteria, reacting to a fire drill, and more. Being proactive and spending time on these routines makes the rest of the year go more smoothly. Establishing your system for learning mathematics should be no different. In order to successfully implement math workshop, make sure you’ve created a strong system of routines and procedures as well as developed a classroom community (see Chapter 2).

Start today, but don’t change everything all at once. If you do and something fails, you won’t know what piece of the change is causing the struggle.