

Raise

RAISE THE CHILD CHANGE THE WORLD



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"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see."

| MARK TWAIN

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In this uncertain time in the world, we have produced a weekly, digital special edition of Raise magazine, which aims to support families as they transition to learning in the home.

In each issue, we will cover topics such as tips for learning at home, caring for your mental health, where to turn for further support, ideas to entertain the family, talking to your kids about natural disasters and feel-good pieces to inspire and motivate.



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Maths Beyond the Classroom

This article from Raise Issue One has been republished as there are some great tips for strengthening maths skills in the home during this period of isolation.

REBECCA BROWN



“ENGAGING IN MATHEMATICS AND BECOMING NUMERATE ALLOWS CHILDREN TO APPLY MATHEMATICAL IDEAS IN THE REAL WORLD.”

Mathematics helps to practise problem solving skills including thinking, analysing and reasoning. This is important because it helps children to solve problems and find solutions. Engaging in mathematics and becoming numerate allows children to apply mathematical ideas in the real world.

If your child is of school age, it is important to have an open dialogue with your child's teacher/educator in order to be a partner in your child's education. Our understanding of the way students learn and the strategies we are teaching and learning have changed to a degree from when the majority of today's parents attended school.

Some questions to ask are:

- What topics/concepts are being taught this term?
- How is my child going with the concepts taught in class?
- Is my child answering maths facts questions quickly or needing time to think?
- Are my child's reading and writing levels affecting their maths result?
- Does my child succeed with problems more when they use concrete materials?
- How can I support learning?
- Does the school have any subscriptions to online learning platforms that my child can participate in? For example, Mathletics.
- If your child is not understanding a concept, how do you adjust the learning and teaching so they have a clearer understanding?

The classroom is no longer just "chalk and talk". Students are working in collaborative teams, physically solving maths problems using concrete materials, engaging in games that have a mathematical element, learning through interactive maths apps and online platforms, building and constructing. The use of inquiry-based learning, gradual release teaching and open-ended questioning is also allowing students to find multiple ways to solve problems and realising that there can be more than one solution. Understanding the 'why' and 'how' of mathematics is key. Giving children purpose and meaning to their learning with real-world scenarios assists them to engage and take ownership of their learning.

Beyond the classroom, and especially at a young age, it is about providing an environment that children feel safe in and giving them confidence. It is ok to make mistakes as it is from these mistakes that we learn and can improve. With parents as first teachers there are a variety of ways to incorporate numeracy skills into your everyday lives. Numeracy skills are important to help develop thinking and reasoning skills. It also helps to teach children life skills such as budgeting, using money, telling the time, measuring and comparing, being able to follow and give directions, explain their thought process and justify their reasons.





Encouraging children of a young age to engage with numeracy can be as simple as:

- counting fingers, toes and toys
- recognising numbers and shapes on objects like clocks and phones or in books
- discussing how many pieces they want their sandwich cut into
- comparing things of different sizes – ‘big’, ‘small’ and ‘medium’
- grouping things together and talking about ‘same’ and ‘different’
- using words to describe where things are – ‘over’, ‘under’ and ‘next to’

Get your child involved in the kitchen and during meal times. This can be as simple as:

- measuring quantities for recipes and using different sizes of measuring tools (how many $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of flour will make 2 cups of flour)
- working out cooking time
- changing the quantities of the recipe if you are to feed more or less people
- cutting and sharing food into different sized portions
- looking at bottles/jars/tins and discussing capacity of various containers
- setting the table for a particular number of people – this requires them to sort cutlery and crockery and determine the amount required

Travelling in the car is the perfect time for numeracy to be discussed. You can:

- use car number plates to create the biggest or smallest number
- estimate the length of the journey
- count the number of particular coloured cars
- looking at road signs to discuss distances
- calculate the time it would take to travel based on speed and distance
- use maps and give directions
- compare journey distances using different routes

Shopping is another way to practise numeracy skills. This can be done by:

- identifying and discussing prices
- calculating change and different combinations of coins and notes
- guessing the value of the coin or note from its description
- weighing fruit and vegetables and working out the cost
- reading labels and discussing capacity, weight, shape, colour
- reading nutritional panels and discussing which contains less or more sugar, kilojoules, vitamins, salt
- calculating the cost of a trip to the movies
- reading catalogues and comparing prices of items at different stores
- working out which item gives the better value based on price and quantity
- counting items as they are scanned
- calculating the cost of items when applying a discount (eg. 25 per cent off)



Have fun with your child and make memories. Playing games and exploring the environment around us is a practical way to encourage numeracy skills.

You can engage in:

- board games such as Monopoly, Yahtzee or Snakes and Ladders
- counting games to practise times tables
- dot-to-dot activities to identify the order of numbers
- card games such as Uno
- sudoku puzzles

Take your children on a “maths walk”:

- compare the size of trees and plants
- have your child find a number of items
- ask them to locate an object that has symmetry
- count the petals on a flower
- discuss seasons
- measure the temperature – is it hotter or colder today and by how many degrees?

Structure mathematical problems around your child’s interests. For example, if their interest is trains then while playing with trains get them to:

- count them or order them in size
- plan a train journey and look at timetables and costs for your family to go on an adventure

Reading books that feature numbers and counting can introduce young children to numbers. Some books to consider:

- *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle
- *At the Beach I See* by Kamsani Bin Salleh
- *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes* by Mem Fox
- *12 Days of Aussie Christmas* by Colin Buchanan

Learning is a journey and we are all lifelong learners. Start as early as you possibly can to teach young children how to count, recognise numbers/ shapes, measure, sort, match and share.

All children are different and so are their learning styles. This is why it is so important to provide a variety of experiences, strategies and hands-on activities to engage them and encourage them to decide how they learn best and what strategies they feel confident to use to solve problems. Hopefully, with this growing confidence in maths, your child’s love of numbers will grow too. After all, mathematics is something that they will use for life, regardless of what road they decide to travel down.

Rebecca is a Year 7 Teacher at MacKillop Catholic College, Mount Peter and a mother of a three and five year old.





Sharing the Reading Experience

Looking for ways to be more involved in your child's education during isolation? The answer may be in a family movie night or catching up on a classic novel!

ANDREW MCKENZIE

If you're looking for family activities or ways to get more involved in your child's learning during this period of isolation, you may like to ask the young people in your household what they are reading for school.

"You might find yourself re-acquainted with books from your past or you might find a new interest in a whole new field of fiction. If you show an interest in reading a book and starting a discussion about the characters or story you might find it re-kindles interest from your children and young people".

And, as an added bonus, many of the books on the study list have film adaptations and your school may be able to provide the necessary links for a family movie night with a difference. You might enjoy seeing a black and white classic like *To Kill a Mockingbird* or more recent titles like *Lord of the Flies* or *Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*.

You will need to check with the young people in your household as to what they are reading for their school in Term 2, but some local secondary colleges provided the following list to whet your appetite – a great mix of Australian and international fiction, some big names and some well-deserved timeless classics.

YEAR 7S ARE READING THE FOLLOWING NOVELS:

- *Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen; *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman; *Blueback* by Tim Winton and *The Barrumbi Kids* by Leonie Norrington; *Matilda* by Roald Dahl.

YEAR 8S AND 9S ARE READING THE FOLLOWING NOVELS:

- *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio; *Once* by Morris Gleitzman; *Boy Overboard* by Morris Gleitzman; *Hitler's Daughter* by Jackie French and *Refuge* also by Jackie French, *Everything I've Never Said* by Samantha Wheeler; *Tomorrow, When the War Began* by John Marsden

YEAR 10S ARE READING THE FOLLOWING CLASSICS:

- *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee; *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding; *Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* by John Boyne and *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck.

St Mary's College Librarian Eloise Harnett says, **"these titles introduce our students to characters who display resilience, courage and hope - qualities which we are all seeking to find in our current lives at the moment".**

Andrew is the Cairns Catholic Education Manager – Governance and Engagement

Reading a school-set book or watching its film adaptation as a family will no doubt be incidental to what your school is doing in its learning-from-home English classes. But it can provide a great experience both for learning and for family. But if you are looking for some cues to start a conversation, top educator Lyn Sharratt has provided the following from her [site](#):

- Knowing what we know about who created this text, how do we expect the author to treat the subject matter?
- Why are we reading or viewing this text?
- What do we already know about the text based on what we can see (Pictures/illustrations)?
- What do the images/pictures suggest? What do the words suggest?
- What kind of language is used (words are used) in this text? What is its influence on the message?
- What do you interpret to be the author's intent? Explain.
- With whom do you think the author wants us to identify or sympathise?
- Who is the target audience? How do you know?
- How might different people interpret the message of the text?
- How are children, adolescents, young adults or parents represented in this text? Are boys or girls represented differently?
- What has been left out of this text that you would like to have seen included?
- Is the text fair? Does it treat the subject matter/sides/parties fairly?
- Who benefits from this text? Who does not?
- What does the reader/viewer need to know ahead of time in order to really understand this text?
- What is real in the text? What is not real? How is reality constructed?
- How might the creator of this text view the world? Why do you think that?





Faith in Times of Crisis

In a time of crisis, we tend to look for comfort in the familiar. It could be a home-cooked meal that brings back memories of our youth, an album of our favourite singer, or photos from celebrations over the years. As the coronavirus crisis continues to play out in Australia and around the world, I have been thinking about how faith can be a comfort for us all at this time.

SHARON O'KEEFE

Faith is the ability to trust and hope in something that is not easily defined or able to be seen. I have spent the last couple of weeks, exercising on my local beach. During this time, I feel the sand beneath my toes and the water wash over my feet; I feel the rain on my face and the wind in my hair. I can see the water, sand and rain, but I can't see the wind. I can see the impact the wind has on the environment, but I don't actually see the wind move around me. I *feel* the wind.

“For me, this is what faith is; it is seeing the impact of those who trust and hope in a belief then feeling what this belief can offer me and my community.”

When Australia declared a state of emergency because of coronavirus we had to change our ways of gathering as a community and connecting with each other. We have also had to change how we nurture our faith. In our Catholic context, there are many spiritualities and ways of practising our faith that helps us find new ways of being in isolation and with each other. For me, I try to find God in all things. This type of practice is called Ignatian Spirituality and encourages us to find wonder and awe in all we do – like when I walk on the beach and feel happy because it is just so beautiful.

In the Cairns Catholic Education community, many of the schools and colleges were founded by women and men who brought their own spirituality with them to help them in their work. The Good Samaritan Sisters practise deep listening through meditation, the Mercy

Sisters have created virtual prayer rooms to practise the Spiritual and Corporal Words of Mercy and the Augustinians work for justice through a practical love of neighbour.



“I have been encouraging teachers and students to make time for journaling. Whether we find comfort through our faith, through the practise of a spirituality or through music, food or photos, I encourage you to spend some time reflecting on what brings you comfort and how you are managing this time. Once we are through this crisis, what a rich read these journals will be!”

Sharon is the Cairns Catholic Education Director Identity and Outreach

A LESSON IN LIFE

STEPHANIE MEEKINGS

Some parents are understandably concerned about their kids falling behind due to the disruptions and different delivery formats of schooling during COVID-19. We're all wading through unknown territory and trying to make the most of the situation we're in. But what if this situation isn't a disadvantage for our kids, but rather an advantage? What if while missing a lesson in school, they're gaining a lesson in life?

What if they have a new appreciation for their teachers and the opportunity to go to school when schools reopen as normal? What if they develop a sense of independence, autonomy and ownership of their education?

What if they feel more gratitude to live in the country we live in and this beautiful region we call home?

What if this generation learns to cook meals from scratch, learns to mow the lawns, pick veggies in the garden, bake grandma's family recipe for scones or how to run a household and contribute to chores?

What if our kids learn to delight in the simple things in life? Family time, sunshine, a gentle breeze, diving into the pool, reading a book, connecting with family and acts of kindness.

And when playgrounds, parks and shops open again, perhaps our kids will have a newfound sense of gratitude for all of these things. When we can hug our friends and kiss our grandparents, perhaps they'll have a new appreciation for these gestures?

Our kids may be in a unique time in our history, but it may not be a disadvantage at all.

Perhaps it will be one of their life's greatest lessons.

And one of ours too.



ISOLATION EXPECTATIONS

STEPHANIE MEEKINGS

As a parent at the onset of the coronavirus crisis, I found myself immediately Googling activities for my son to keep him equal parts entertained, educated and stimulated. I considered topping up the paint supplies and making an extra batch of play dough (if only I could get my hands on some flour)! I was worried we'd run out of activities faster than we ran out of toilet paper and the cabin fever would come knocking like an uninvited guest. But after pinning away on Pinterest, cutting out craft and setting up science experiments, I realised perhaps I didn't need to do it all.

I am still a working mother with deadlines to meet, I am still a wife, a homemaker, a friend, the snack maker... the wearer of many hats and juggler of many balls. Throw in a global pandemic, isolation and uncertainty and I was definitely feeling stretched. And as I read yet another article about how to be productive in isolation by picking up a second language or learning a new hobby (hats off to those who have mastered any of these new skills), I decided I just needed to lower those expectations a few notches.

Parents aren't expected to be the teacher, the employee and the parent while replicating their "normal" daily routine in the home. Teachers are still teaching, just in a different way. Kids are still learning, just in a different format. Your isolation expectations may be to thrive, but they may just be to survive - and that is totally fine in my books. Equally, your expectations of your children and partner may need adjusting during this time, too.

We've watched more TV in the last few weeks than we have in the last few years and the house is being trashed on the daily, but we've also played endless games, read countless books and made a multitude of memories together in our family home. So while I won't be finessing my French during this time, I will be surviving and my son will hopefully remember this period fondly as the time we were all together.

Stephanie is a Cairns Catholic Education Digital Media Officer



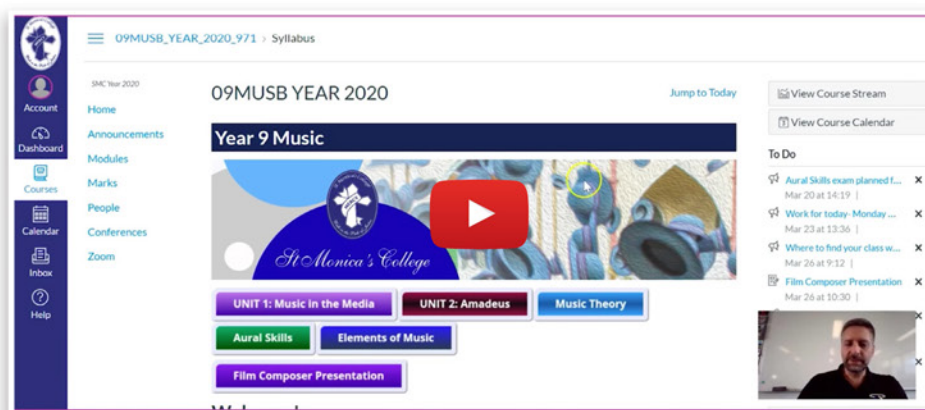
"If you want to change the world,
go home and love your family."

| MOTHER TERESA

Our schools have been using a number of apps to support student learning. Most of them have common features such as real-time interactivity and sharing resources.

In the last few weeks our schools have been doing a fantastic job in repurposing the features of these apps as we moved to a delivery model based on home learning, in ways and to an extent that the original designers might never have envisaged.

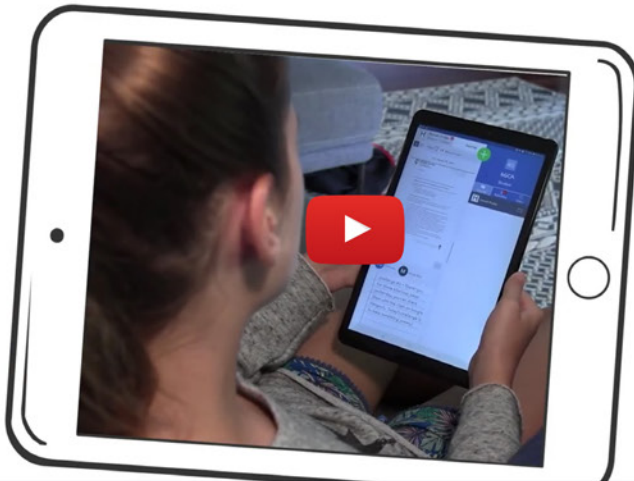
Three of the more popular systems are **Canvas**, **SeeSaw** and **Google Classroom**. Your school may or may not be using them, but these tutorial videos can give you an insight as to how these apps work and how the young people in your household may be using them as their educational journey continues.



Google Classroom



COVID-19



Learning from home with:



Cairns Catholic Education's website has a **central hub** with links to updates, official sites and resources around student wellbeing on our website, for all parents.

These resources include advice for parents in supporting children, tips for coping with coronavirus anxiety and ways of reducing your risk.



www.cns.catholic.edu.au/coronavirus

To help keep informed, visit the Cairns Catholic Education Emergency Communications **Facebook page**.




Cairns Catholic Education Emergency Communication



**Catholic
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Learning with Faith and Vision



“When educating
the minds of our youth,
we must not forget
to educate their
hearts.”

DALAI LAMA



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Learning with Faith and Vision

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