

# Math-nificent Day!

## Tips for a successful Math-nificent Day and Night:

### ***Mentor Training***

- It is very important for the success of the Mathnificent Day that 40 to 60 students know the games ahead of the event. This number is needed so that there are 2 groups of mentors assisting during the day and that each group of mentors work no more than 3 sessions.
- Every game should have a minimum of 2 students (1 from each mentor group) who know the rules well enough to teach them to others.
- It's a good idea to have the mentors teach the game to an adult who can check for misinterpretation of the rules of play. Another way to check would be for the mentors to rewrite the instructions in their own words and that these be compared to the originals for verification.
- At the end of each session of play, mentors should know not to put the game away in its box but to get it "game ready" (cards shuffled, board set up, puzzle pieces collected) for the next group.
- There are ways to tie this learning into the curriculum. Schools have had the mentors write reviews of the games, both as a classroom assignment and/or for publication in the weekly student bulletin or newsletter. The publication of reviews is also good advertising for the evening event.

### ***Scheduling for Mathnificent Day***

- Generally the Mathnificent day is divided into 6 40-45 minute sessions with a lunch break scheduled in.
- Have your teachers use the last 3-5 minutes of a session to gather their students and leave before the next session's group(s) enter.
- A finalized schedule of attendance at each session should be available to Math 'n' Stuff two days before the event.

### ***Game preparation***

- Make copies of all the instructions and keep copies in a central file.
- Laminate the instructions used during the day.
- Some schools have entered the games into their library system giving them a barcode. This allows for teachers (and sometimes families) to check out the games.
- The new Glad/Ziplock plastic storage boxes make excellent containers for card games and puzzles.

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- Ziplock bags are good for containing small game pieces.
- Boxes can be reinforced with strapping tape for a longer life.

## ***Physical Set up***

- The games for the most part require tables and chairs. Mind Madness, Zometool, Wedgits, and Klikko are ones that are best played on the floor on gym mats.
- Set the tables up in a pattern that encourages free movement. Diagonal layouts work better than grids.
- Number of tables: This is based on the number of games and the type of game. The average lunchroom table will hold 3 four person games, 6 two-person games, or 12 solitaire games (2 placed back to back in 6 places on the table). Group games, such as Apples to Apples or Set, need the end of a table with some extra chairs (these can also be played on mats on the floor).
- It is best to mix up the games, alternating card games with board games or solitaires. If you have duplicates of a game or games with similar pieces (ie: Rush Hour and Rush Hour Jr), place them on separate tables so that the pieces do not get intermingled.
- Do not indicate the age range or grade level of a game during the Mathnificent Day. This encourages younger players to attempt games that they can successfully play and allows older players to enjoy a “young” game

## ***Set up***

- It takes about 4 “human” hours to set up for a Mathnificent Day. The more people available, the shorter the set-up time (with 4 people it should take an hour).
- If possible, have the tables, chairs and mats set up the day before. This shortens the morning set-up substantially.
- Once the tables and mats are set out, the games need to be placed on them and set up “ready for play,” (ie: cards out of the box, board games out with the pieces set up, rules by the games). Empty boxes can go side-by-side between games.
- The first group of mentors can assist with readying the games for play if they are available 10 to 15 minutes before the first session of playing time.
- It is best for the playing set-up to remain in place for the duration of the entire day. If there is no other option but to move the set-up, have an organized plan for how to accomplish this. With the right number of helpers and a take-down and reset-up plan it can be done.

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## ***Volunteers***

- What we have found is that presence of the volunteers has a positive effect in creating an atmosphere of order.
- The primary source of volunteers is your parent group, but schools have successfully used college students, high school students doing community service, and seniors who tutor or mentor at the school.
- Volunteers do not need to know the games ahead of time. Having the volunteers model the learning process is a valuable lesson in itself.
- A fresh group of volunteers scheduled for the end of the evening event helps everyone go home sooner.

## ***Teacher Wish Lists***

- Many schools have had a wonderful response from parents when they have had Wish Lists indicating which games their student's teacher would like in the classroom.
- The form enclosed can be used as a master to create the Wish List during your Mathnificent Day.
- The lists are collected during the day and posted during the evening event.
- Parents can make a selection from the list, cross out the game and purchase it.
- A collection point for the games can be designated or parents can give the game directly to the teacher.
- We have had schools that have found the need to clarify whether the game is being purchased as a gift for the individual teacher or as a gift to the classroom/school. It is the school's discretion whether to make this distinction.

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## Wish List

Teacher's name:

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Games:

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\* **Please note:** If you choose to purchase a game for your child's classroom, cross out your selection before you purchase it.