

Maths Wrap

Helps children
get a handle
on maths



A British inventor has created a revolutionary new way of teaching children their times tables. Maths Wrap looks like an iPod and feels like a game, but it's a powerful tool for building confidence and helping children understand the process of multiplication.

The inventor, Simon Deacon, is a maths tutor and former naval engineer. "I noticed that many children struggle with learning their times tables from books," he says. "I wanted to give them something more dynamic – something they could actually hold and play with."

Maths Wrap's secret is its 'hands-on' feel: children learn by doing, not just by rote. The iPod-sized device has numbered notches down two sides, and a cord attached. It comes with 12 cards, to test different tables. You wrap the string around the casing, through the appropriate notches: for the four-times table, your first 'wrap' hits numbers 1 and 4; your second hits 2 and 8; your third goes through 3 and 12, and so on.

When you've finished, you've created a criss-cross pattern on the back. If your pattern matches the pattern in the window, bingo! – you've got it right. If it doesn't fit exactly, your four-times table needs more work.

Maths Wrap uses the principles of kinaesthetic education: learning by doing something physical. "Many children learn best when they're physically engaged, and doing something with their hands. It helps them process information," says Simon Deacon. The 'doing-and-seeing' method also helps children recognise patterns of numbers in the tables they're learning. Multiplication tables are the building blocks of mathematics: children who are confident with them find it easier to master complex problems such as division and algebra. "But the real beauty of Maths Wrap is that it's fun to play with," says Simon Deacon. "Once children get used to using their wrap, they soon start to see who can do their tables fastest."

Maths Wrap has already won the approval of many teachers. "It will transform the learning of multiplication tables for children, both at home and in the classroom," says Claire Davies, a Warrington deputy head.

The launch is the culmination of a five-year dream for its inventor. "I made the prototype in a shed in the back garden," says Simon Deacon. "Since then, it's been through quite a few changes, and lots of road-testing by hundreds of children. But the heart of the thing remains the same – that children should have fun with the fundamental process of learning their times tables."

Price: £4.99 Maths Wrap is available from November 1, 2008, from www.mathswrap.co.uk. For further information, contact: Simon Deacon 07967 385777 simon.deacon@mathswrap.co.uk

