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# **Fuss-Free Math**

## **Book 1: Written Calculations**

**Activities for all students, including those with Specific Learning Difficulties, working at Intermediate Level.**

**Ages 9+**

Focusing on the reinforcement of “the basics” in math, these activities can be used as either classroom consolidation or homework activity sheets.

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# Information on the Series

## About The Books

This homework series has been created for classroom teachers and parents – with students of a range of abilities taken into consideration. The focus will be on reinforcement of “the basics” in math, as well as activities aimed at developing understanding of classroom activities in mathematics.

It is sometimes difficult to locate materials suitable for homework activities in the area of specific learning difficulties. Some homework is designed to cover a broad range of topics on one page – making it confusing for some students to read and answer. Some homework activities are not linked to classroom work and do not include examples or answers which enable parents to support their child’s learning.

Students with Specific Learning Difficulties experience a range of problems with their academic learning. These aspects include:

- Difficulties with word recognition and comprehension
- Coping with pages that are too cluttered and with too many differing requirements
- Being unable to sequence, recall and apply strategies in abstract situations
- Striving to process formation – while working to meet deadlines
- Having trouble with personal organization with their schoolwork.

The books in this series are designed with these problems in mind, and whilst pages are designed for the student with learning difficulties, they can also be used as a simple and straightforward introduction to concepts or a reinforcement of mathematical strategies for the whole class. The books will follow a basic format, with a variety of homework topics usually containing a choice of two worksheets.

## Structure of the Books

The series is presented in books as follows:

### Middle Primary

#### Book One: Number: Written Calculations

Includes information on specific learning difficulties, as well as activities on:

- \* Digit values
- \* Rounding
- \* Addition of whole numbers up to 10 000, including regrouping
- \* Subtraction of whole numbers up to 10 000, including regrouping
- \* Addition and subtraction of decimals, up to 2 places, including regrouping
- \* Multiplication of whole numbers up to 100 by whole numbers up to 10, including regrouping
- \* Division of whole numbers up to 100 by whole numbers up to 10, with remainders

#### Book Two: Number: Applications

Includes information on specific learning difficulties, as well as activities on:

- \* Skill drills
- \* Greater than / less than values
- \* Money skills, including making up amounts, ordering cost prices and working out change
- \* Fractions - identifying up to  $\frac{1}{12}$ , equivalent fractions, ordering and adding simple fractions
- \* Estimation

#### Book Three: Chance and Data; Measurement and Space

Includes information on specific learning difficulties, as well as activities on:

- \* Tallies - taking and interpreting basic tallies
- \* Bar graphs - introduction to construction and labelling
- \* Estimating and measuring length in cm and mm to 100 cm
- \* Measuring perimeter in cm and mm
- \* Working out area by counting grid squares
- \* Recognizing and estimating volume of everyday objects more than / less than 1 Liter
- \* Recognizing and estimating mass of everyday objects more than / less than 1kg
- \* Telling digital and analog time to 5 minutes
- \* Locating dates and calculating weeks /days on a calendar
- \* Reading and constructing simple daily timetables

## National Curriculum Links

The aim of the activities is to focus on one concept per page, therefore, only one standard from the National Mathematics standards will usually be addressed.

## Specific Learning Difficulties

This section will contain information from a variety of referenced sources including online literature and recommendations from trained and experienced consultants. Information will include descriptions of the various learning difficulties and ideas for strategies in the classroom and at home.

A list of website addresses containing information and ideas is provided for teachers and parents.

## Student Lifesavers

Many students with Specific Learning Difficulties become overwhelmed when expected to recall basic facts when carrying out more complex calculations. Students may grasp a concept, but be unable to apply the strategy because they are struggling to remember tables and combinations. To focus on the teaching point and alleviate stress for students, these tables and charts can be kept within easy access for the students.

## “Parent Power” Pages

The information provided on Specific Learning Difficulties at the beginning of this book can also be photocopied and given to parents who are requesting additional information. However, it should be made clear that this is a guide only, and contact with local recognized Specific Learning Difficulty associations or Child Development Centers should be made if there are any particular concerns.

Parent Power pages can be photocopied and sent home at the commencement of each unit and include:

- Terminology
- Mathematical strategies and examples
- Learning and practice ideas in the home and community

It is also suggested that teachers photocopy answers to each section and include these when sending home the Parent Power Page. This enables parents to feel confident in checking their child’s work and giving them valuable, immediate feedback.

## Progress Charts

It is widely appreciated that success is built on success, and the more students are able to track their own progress, the more likely they are to be motivated to attempt the next stage in their learning. Students can keep these progress charts as an ongoing record of their homework.

### How To Use This Book

Each topic will focus on a single math concept with a choice of two separate homework sheets. The teacher is able to introduce and explain the homework to the whole class and then select which worksheet is assigned to each student. As both worksheets focus on the same content, only differing by the level of complexity, there is no need to isolate students by giving them separate instructions. Teachers may also choose to give all students the first sheet, and then follow up with the second sheet if the student is able to complete the first with minimal difficulties. Some topics in this book have 3 or 4 sheets. These should be completed in sequential order.

Note: Although the second worksheet is designed for the more “able” students in the classroom, this certainly does not discount students with learning difficulties. Research shows that many students with Specific Learning Difficulties can work at an average to above average level, provided that their needs are taken into consideration. With this in mind, both worksheets have been designed so that ALL students have the opportunity to be extended.

# Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs)

## What are Specific Learning Difficulties?

Specific Learning Difficulties **ARE**:

- A range of conditions including dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and dysgraphia.
- Significant difficulties in one or a few areas of learning, whilst demonstrating average to above average abilities in most or all other areas.

Specific Learning Difficulties **ARE NOT**:

- A result of global low intelligence, physical conditions such as visual or hearing impairments, or a lack of appropriate parenting or teaching.
- Attention difficulties (or behavioral disorders) such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Specific Learning Difficulties are founded on a reduced *capacity to learn*, and attention difficulties stem from a reduced capacity to *concentrate and attend* to tasks when learning.

Specific Learning Difficulties **CAN**:

- Appear to overlap, as learning areas often merge. For example, a person with reading difficulties may struggle in math in the presence of lengthy word problems or poorly set-out activities ([www.dyslexia-speld.com](http://www.dyslexia-speld.com)).

## Descriptions of the Types of Specific Learning Difficulties

**Dyslexia** is the most commonly recognized and well-researched SLD, characterised by difficulties in:

- Recognizing, reading and spelling words;
- Comprehension of written information;
- Relating new written concepts to stored ideas and existing knowledge;
- *Phonological coding*, the process of associating sounds with letter groups;
- Producing written work (sequencing letters, Recognizing letter reversals).

([www.dyslexia-speld.com](http://www.dyslexia-speld.com))

**Dyscalculia** describes significant difficulties in the area of mathematics. People with dyscalculia may possess average to above average linguistic skills but struggle with:

- Mental recall of basic facts;
- Accurate calculation;
- Understanding and applying mathematical concepts, rules and formulas;
- Awareness of time, direction (such as spatial and mapping skills) and sequence;
- The ability to estimate and recognize errors in math work;
- Money and budgeting;
- Games that involve strategic planning or complex scoring.

([www.dyscalculia.org](http://www.dyscalculia.org))

**Dysgraphia** outlines difficulties with the production of written language which may occur in isolation or in conjunction with other SLDs. Underlying causes include difficulties with sequencing and ordering of letters and words, attention difficulties leading to poor fine motor and organizational skills and reduced auditory processing. ([www.idonline.org](http://www.idonline.org))

**Dyspraxia** describes difficulties in the ability to plan and execute new or unfamiliar movements in a coordinated manner. During early childhood, many new tasks are being learned, so this is a time where dyspraxia can significantly impact upon daily living. Problems can appear with performing fine and gross motor tasks (Motor Dyspraxia) and / or speech-related tasks (Verbal or oral Dyspraxia). ([www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk](http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk))

## Associated Difficulties

### Visual and Visual-Perceptual Difficulties (Source: [www.children-special-needs.org](http://www.children-special-needs.org))

These difficulties **may** occur in conjunction with, or as a result of, other learning or attention difficulties. The problems listed below can also place a considerable strain on the reading process for a child, and can often go unnoticed until the child is in primary school, where the he / she spends longer periods of time focusing on print.

**Myopia** (short-sightedness) - may lead to difficulties in reading information written on the blackboard or on charts around the classroom, if not rectified with glasses or contact lenses.

**Binocular coordination** - the action of both eyes moving together, a process required to read effectively.

**Convergence** - the movement of both eyes inwards, reaching an accurate point of focus.

**Fixation** - where the eyes meet on a specific point so that the image is clear.

**Pursuit** - smoothly tracking across an image or follow a moving object.

**Saccades** - a "jump" from one point of focus to another without losing place. This is particularly important as skilled reading involves a series of fixations on words across a line rather than one continuous movement.

- Children who have difficulty with any of the above may show signs such as skipping or re-reading lines, misreading small words, using their finger or moving their head as they read.