

Singapore Mathematics

Singapore Math* is the Gilbert Christian School mathematics program in kindergarten through grade three. Singapore's mathematics methods first caught the world's attention when results of a world-wide math test, The International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), were published in 1995. TIMSS data from 1995 and again in 1999 showed students in Singapore ranking well above students in other countries in both mathematics and science. The Singapore method of mathematics instruction gives young students a deep understanding of fundamental mathematics concepts by introducing concepts with concrete manipulatives, then pictorial examples, and finally moving to abstract algorithms. The emphasis is on integrating concepts and skills. For instance, young children experience difficulty understanding the one-to-one correspondence between numbers they are saying and the items they are counting. Singapore math addresses this by adding a pictorial component to bridge the gap between the manipulative to the abstract. The tens-base approach of Singapore Math helps students to better understand place value. Understanding place value is very important in order to move on to multiple-digit arithmetic. Students often make mistakes when regrouping. Singapore gives students a concrete understanding of place value, which will help them understand common mistakes. Math in Focus is the curriculum Gilbert Christian Elementary School has chosen to deliver the Singapore math method of instruction. Math in Focus allows teachers to individualize instruction because it provides enrichment exercises, and more practice exercise with every lesson. Once the students have obtained a concrete understanding of the basics in Math in Focus, they move on to Saxon Mathematics and focus on the algorithms of arithmetic. The Singapore Math

website is <http://www.singaporemath.com/>. Math in Focus information may be found at <http://www.greatsource.com/mathinfocus>.

*"Singapore Math" is not a trade name but a general term referring to math instruction designed by Singapore's Ministry of Education. At Gilbert Christian Elementary School, we have purchased Math in Focus to help us instruct students K-3 in the method.