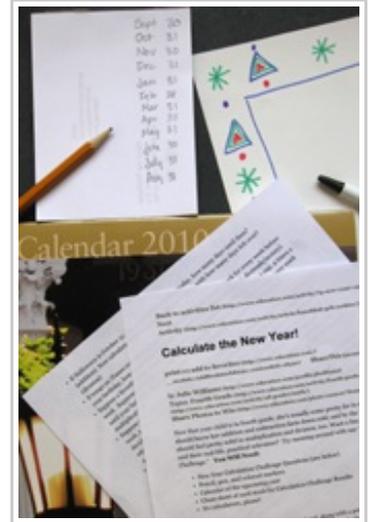


New Year's Math

Now that your child is in fourth grade, she's usually come pretty far in some fundamental math. She should know her addition and subtraction facts down cold; and by the middle of fourth grade, she should feel pretty solid in multiplication and division, too. Want a fun way to reinforce those skills and their real-life, practical relevance? Try messing around with our "New Year Calculation Challenge."

What You Need:

- New Year Calculation Challenge Questions (see below)
- Pencil, pen, and colored markers
- Calendar of the upcoming year
- Clean sheet of card stock for Calculation Challenge Results
- No calculators, please!



What You Do:

1. Start with a calendar of the full year ahead, along with a pencil and some scratch paper for calculations. Then pull out a sheet of card stock for Calculation Challenge Results. Encourage your child to decorate the margins, too—while other kids may find that some of their calculations overlap, each one will be unique.
2. Now use the calendar to calculate the following New Year Math. (Psst: parents, here's a cheat sheet italics are included in case your child gets fuzzy on the required math operations).
 - From today until the last day of the school year, how many school days are left? (addition)
 - How many days until the first day of spring break? (addition)
 - Between January 1 and July 1, what is the average length of each month? (addition and division).
 - Your birthday is _____. If you start counting today, how many days before your birthday? (addition). Now calculate: how many full weeks until then, with how many days left over? (division).
 - If Halloween is October 31, and you started counting today, how many days until then? (addition) Now calculate: how many full weeks until then, with how many days left over? (division)
 - If songs on iTunes cost 99 cents each, and you DON'T buy one per week for every week before your birthday, how much money will you have saved? (multiplication with decimals/money).
 - Suppose a favorite adult in your life happens to buy Starbucks's coffee for \$2.65 a cup, 4 times a week. Suppose, starting today, that this person only buys coffee two times a week, every week until your birthday. How much money will this person save? (addition, subtraction, multiplication).
 - Suppose your parent uses 1/2 gallon of gas driving you to school and back every day, five days a week, and your car's tank holds 14 gallons. To save the environment, you and your parents decide to bike or walk every day instead. How many days of school would you need to save a whole tank of gas? (multiplication with fractions) Extra challenge: by biking or walking to school, how many tanks of gas could you save between now and the last day of school?
 - Baseball season's opening game will be _____ (date) this year. If you save 50 cents in allowance starting this week, how much money will you have for baseball tickets and hotdogs by the opening day? (multiplication)

Once launched, you may find that this activity leads to lots of other calculation challenges—average weather temperatures, for example, or cost of junk food. Let your math imagination soar—it's all powerful support for your child's learning! Just be prepared for a twist and turn now and then. If you're the adult who loves Starbucks's, you might want to have some good arguments to counter your fourth grade

accountant once she gets rolling!

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