

Real-Life Math

To get your child applying math to real-life situations, have her plan a fun night out for herself, and figure out the cost. Using money makes math matter in a big way! Plus, this activity will give your child the opportunity to feel like math can work for her, not against her. You don't need tail and a top hat to go out on the town—just a few math skills!

What You Need:

- Pencil and paper

What You Do:

1. Determine how much money you want to give your child for a fun night out. However, she can only get the money if she does the math correctly prior to the night out and does not exceed her budget.
2. Have your child write down her ideas for a fun night out. They must be very specific (i.e. movie, exact food items, etc.). Then have her find out the exact cost of each item on the list. Give her the sales tax for your area.
3. Now that your child has a list of activities with the cost of each one next to each activity, she is ready to do the math!
4. Have her take each activity and determine the cost of it, including the sales tax, if applicable. So, if one activity is to have a McDonald's happy meal, have her call to find out the cost. She will then multiply the cost by the correct sales tax percentage. So, if the meal is \$2.99 and the sales tax is 8% she would multiply 2.99 by .08 and find the tax to be .23. She would then add that to the 2.99, and the total cost of the meal is \$3.22.
5. After she does the math, check her work. If she has done it all correctly, give her the money for the fun night out and set up a date and time for it.
6. Don't forget to have her figure out how much she will have left over so when you ask for your change, you will know if she is trying to keep some for herself!

Extension Activity:

For older children, you can have them figure out how much gas it will take for you to bring them to and from their fun night out. Tell them how many miles per gallon of gas your vehicle gets. Find out the cost of gas per gallon. Now they will appreciate your taxi service!

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