

Mayflower Math

Okay, it's true: the Mayflower is generally a social studies topic, not a math one. But if you've got an elementary school math maven, we think the historical record also contains some great opportunities for number practice!

Here's an activity to pull out for Thanksgiving, as everyone talks about the history of the holiday. You'll notice that some questions are much easier than others, and that's on purpose. We think that sixth graders should be able to handle the whole thing; but younger kids may also be able to do parts (and feel very proud of themselves in the process!). Of course, parents, you're also welcome to "hop on board" as well!



What You Need:

- "Mayflower Math" worksheet ([download here](#))
- Pencil
- Scratch paper for working out the problems (Psst: parents, you may be tempted to use a calculator, but we recommend some old fashioned pencil and paper figuring to help kids reinforce the math behind their answers.)

What You Do:

1. Before you even put out worksheet or pencils, try engaging your child on the topic of the Mayflower. Remember: elementary classrooms almost always include Thanksgiving books and activities, and your child may know more than you think. For example, does anyone in your family know how many days the ship sailed? How many people were on board? How many were women, men, or kids? How big was the ship?
2. After guessing, download our "Mayflower Math" worksheet and get to work. Don't worry if your kids skip around—as we've noted, these problems vary widely in difficulty. Encourage your young mathematician to try lots of strategies, and to ask for help along the way, too.
3. When you're done, talk about your answers. You may all be impatient to check right and wrong, but an important math standard is "reasoning"—the ability to track your thinking and explain it. Your math teacher will thank you for the extra care.
4. Want to check your work? Download our answer sheets here: [Answer Sheet 1](#), [Answer Sheet 2](#).