Supporting your child in preparing for maths assessments
INTRODUCTION

“My child never seems to have any homework”

“I do not have the skills to help my child with some/most/any of his homework”

“I never know when my child has an assessment coming up, so how can I help/monitor his preparation?”
DISCLAIMER

I stand before you as a supposed “expert”. I am a long way from having all the answers to all your questions. What I do offer is tricks and techniques that have been created over forty years of my life in schools. These consist of cajoling, bluffing, begging, bullying, rewarding, embarrassing and any other sneaky thing I can do to make the child do what I want them to; in short, what any good parent would do! My hope is that some of this may be useful to you.
KEY FACTORS

You are not expected to be a substitute teacher.

Your child is in an environment where he has access to knowledge/skills that he then has to bring to an assessment. How he maximises his performance depends on a number of factors:
The learner (your child)

- Capacity to learn the subject matter
- Personality
- Peer groups (social....academic....in the classroom)
- Motivation (Intrinsic / extrinsic)
- Opportunity
- Guidance and support (home....school)
NUMBER TWO

THE SCHOOL

• Environment and ethos
• Teacher(s)
• Support staff
• Communication
  child/teacher....school/parent
• Comfort levels
NUMBER THREE

THE PARENTS AND HOME ENVIRONMENT

• Relationship and communication
• Physical (study room......music.....tv)
• Expectations
• Consistency
• Communication with the school
• Communication with the child’s teacher(s)
THE PERFECT SCENARIO

• A fully motivated, conscientious, capable learner

• A dedicated, knowledgeable teacher who is the ultimate communicator

• A school environment where the learner is academically and emotionally happy and fulfilled

• A support network outside the school that fulfils all the needs of the learner
TECHNIQUES THAT MAY GET US CLOSE TO THE PERFECT SCENARIO

THE LEARNER IN THE CLASSROOM

Efficiency is enhanced by:

- attention to detail
- maximum use of the time available
- seeking help (do not rely on a friend)
- being honest about what is known
- undivided attention at the introduction phase of a new concept
THE LEARNER AT HOME

• Prepare summaries of the content
• Identify the areas/concepts that are strong
• Identify the areas that need your attention

YOU MUST KNOW WHAT YOU DON’T KNOW

• MAKE CERTAIN THAT YOU GET HELP TO FIX THE CONCEPTS THAT YOU DO NOT KNOW

• KEEP UP WITH THE PROGRAMME

THIS IS THE DAILY HOMEWORK
EXAMPLES

• 9AEP TEST ONE 2013 ANALYSIS

• 9AEP CHAPTER SUMMARIES

• KEY ALGEBRA SKILLS CHECKLIST

• LINEAR RELATIONSHIPS SUMMARY
THE LEARNER AFTER AN ASSESSMENT

• Obtain an answer sheet for the test
• Check the ones you got wrong
• Can you fix the ones that were wrong
  (i.e. do you understand how/why you made the mistake?)
• Identify the ones that you cannot correct because you do not know where you went wrong

Get help to fix the ones you cannot correct
HOMEWORK

I do not give my students a sheet that says “homework” but they always have “home study”

• Collect, organise notes and examples
• Make sure you understand the work that was done in class EACH DAY (practice at least two types of each question)

Parents: ask your child to show/demonstrate what they learned in class that day. Get them to identify the exercise done in class and pick some questions for them to do. Check their answers in the back of the book.
PRIOR TO TESTS

• Identify the areas/concepts that still need work (if they have been updating their summary sheets regularly this should be easy)
• Prepare notes for the test that only reflect items of which they are unsure.
• Use worked examples instead of lengthy, verbose descriptions
• Do not clutter up your notes....make them “user-friendly” so that you can find things easily

EXAMPLES........
EFFICIENCY

Your child should have been given a programme of work for the year. This contains essential information about what is being taught, and when, as well as the schedule for all assessments.

Most teachers now communicate with parents (mostly via email) and it is essential that those lines of communication remain open and informative. If not forthcoming request updated marks and results as this will ensure you are aware of your child’s status in that class or subject.

MOST KIDS DO NOT PLAN TO FAIL....THEY FAIL TO PLAN