

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF  
TEACHERS OF MATHEMATICS

# FOCAL POINTS—

## Grades 1 and 2



A Quest for Coherence

*This is the third in a series of articles exploring the use of the 2006 National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) publication, Curriculum Focal Points for Prekindergarten through Grade 8 Mathematics: A Quest for Coherence. The series introduction from NCTM President Skip Fennell, explaining what the Curriculum Focal Points are and why NCTM developed them, appeared in the December 2007/January 2008 issue of Teaching Children Mathematics (page 315). In subsequent TCM articles, the authors of the various grade bands discuss focal points for one or two grade levels. Because one principle of Curriculum Focal Points is that of cohesive curriculum, in which ideas develop across the grades, we encourage teachers of all grade levels to read the full series.*

A first-grade teacher listened to two students “sharing” some crackers. “Come on!” said Josh. “You already had seven, and now you took five more!” The teacher asked both of them how many that would total. Josh answered, “Easy. Seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve.” Marissa had a different way: “Five and five is ten; so take five, put it with the five, and two left. Twelve.”

*Curriculum Focal Points* (NCTM 2006) defines the mathematics that every child should know and be able to do for each specific age or grade level addressed in the document. In this article, we discuss the Focal Points for first and second grade.

### First-Grade Mathematics

In the domain of Number and Operations, children develop strategies for adding and subtracting whole numbers based on their experience working with small numbers in prekindergarten and kindergarten. For example, in those grades, children should have learned to accurately and efficiently count sets of objects as well as produce sets of a given number. Are they finished with counting then? No! First graders still need to develop a variety of counting skills and concepts.

In the opening vignette, Josh showed the ability to “count on.” For many children, this skill begins with the ability to verbally count forward, and then backward, from any number. If this seems an easy skill to you, try to start at *J* and say the alphabet backward. It is not as easy as you thought it would be, is it? And we have known the alphabet for much longer than the few years that children have known numbers.

After learning to count on, children then learn to count to a certain number, such as “two more than seven.” Again, test yourself *without* using numbers at all: What is *D* more than *J* in the alphabet?

Finally, children need to learn to use these abilities in quantitative situations. For example, if you count five marbles into a bag, then drop more in, can your students quickly tell you how many are in the bag? If not, start by repeatedly putting only one more in each time. Then ask them, “How many now?” Next, increase the number you put in the bag to two at a time, and so forth. Children can learn to count backward in much the same way. Perhaps surprisingly, counting on is often a better strategy for most children, even for subtraction.

By Julie Sarama and Douglas H. Clements

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# Focal Points Grade 3

**Denver Public Schools**



### **Focal Points Grade 3:**

**Focus in Grades 3-5** Amy Mirra, 2008 Focus in Grades 3-5 is part of a series that shows teachers how to incorporate NCTM's Curriculum Focal Points for PreK-8 into their current mathematics curricula. The book provides practical ideas, sample student work, and a sample state math curricula organized around the focal points. By focusing more intensely on fewer topics at each grade level, students gain a deeper understanding of mathematical ideas. This volume will help teachers think about what a focused curriculum means and how they might begin to build focus into their existing curricula. **Focus in Grade 3** Jane F. Schielack, 2009 The goal of each grade-specific book in the Teaching with Curriculum Focal Points series is to present the mathematics in each of the Focal Points in more detail. Follow an instructional progression from introducing and building concepts to developing depth of understanding to strengthening fluency. **Early Algebraization** Jinfa Cai, Eric Knuth, 2011-02-24 In this volume, the authors address the development of students' algebraic thinking in the elementary and middle school grades from curricular, cognitive, and instructional perspectives. The volume is also international in nature, thus promoting a global dialogue on the topic of early algebraization. **Mathematics Worksheets Don't Grow Dendrites** Marcia L. Tate, 2008-08-21 The author does a good job of describing the NCTM content standards and providing examples that incorporate recommendations from NCTM and other experts in the field on how best to deepen students' understanding of mathematics. Linda Kallam, Professor of Mathematics, Southeastern Oklahoma State University. A very useful resource for new and experienced teachers. The book will also equip administrators with strategies that they can model in staff meetings and with teachers. Pam Summers, K-12 Mathematics Coordinator, Lubbock Independent School District, TX. Engage students in effective, meaningful experiences in mathematics. Students engaged in active learning experiences gain long-term retention of the skills and content they learn. In this user-friendly guide, Marcia L. Tate follows the successful format of her previous bestsellers and offers math teachers 20 powerful, brain-based teaching strategies that translate into meaningful, firsthand experiences for all learners. Mathematics Worksheets Don't Grow Dendrites provides educators with creative ways to incorporate visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile modalities and promote increased academic achievement in mathematics. The author also focuses on the core NCTM focal points for algebra, geometry, numbers and operations, data analysis, and probability, problem solving, reasoning, and proof, communication, connections, and representation. The chapters offer a what, why, and how for each strategy. Specific, brain-compatible mathematics activities and lessons submitted by real teachers from across the country. Space for teachers to reflect on and apply individual strategies in their lessons. With a bibliography of math and literature resources and a lesson planning guide, this book can transform classrooms into places where students excel academically and where learning is fun. Curriculum Focal Points for Prekindergarten Through Grade 8 Mathematics National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2006 Curriculum Focal Points for Prekindergarten through Grade 8 Mathematics: A Quest for Coherence provides a rationale for focal points for each grade level, prekindergarten-8.

**Curriculum Development for Students with Mild Disabilities , Teaching Children Mathematics ,2009-08**  
**Strategies for Teaching Learners with Special Needs** Edward A. Polloway,James R. Patton,Loretta Serna,2008  
 Revised to incorporate important new information about No Child Left Behind and the 2004 re authorization of IDEA this classic work in the field of teaching methodology for students with special needs continues to be the most comprehensive textbook available for students with mild high incidence disabilities i e learning disabilities mild retardation intellectual disabilities emotional and behavioral disorders and students experiencing learning problems in the general education classroom The focus of the book is on effective instructional strategies for students being served in diverse educational settings with a primary emphasis on those being taught in inclusive educational environments In Part I the text provides basic information on curriculum development and instruction while in Part II an in depth discussion of key curricular areas is provided For educators teaching learning disabled students

**Focus in Grade 4** Jane F. Schielack,2009 Shows teachers and others how to organise instruction in grade 4 around the three Focal Points that Curriculum Focal Points identifies for this grade level Practical suggestions support focusing on developing quick recall of multiplication and division facts and fluency in whole number multiplication understanding decimals and their connection with fractions and working with area and the areas of two dimensional shapes

American Book Publishing Record ,2006

**Focus in Grade 5** Karen C. Fuson,John SanGiovanni,Thomasenia Lott Adams,2009 One in a series of grade level publications this is designed to support teachers supervisors and coordinators as they begin the discussion of a more focused curriculum across and within prekindergarten through eighth grade as presented in Curriculum Focal Points Additionally teacher educators should find it useful as a vehicle for exploring mathematical ideas and curriculum issues involving the grade 5 mathematics curriculum with their preservice teachers

**Focus in Grades 6-8** Amy Mirra,2009 Shows teachers how they can incorporate the Curriculum Focal Points for PreK 8 into their current mathematics curricula The book provides practical ideas sample student work and sample state math curriculum organised around the Focal Points This volume will help teachers think about what a focused curriculum means and how they might begin to build focus into their existing curriculum

*High Points in the Work of the High Schools of New York City* ,1945

Kunkel's Musical Review ,1904

**Art, Grades Ten, Eleven, and Twelve, Senior High School** Denver Public Schools,1925

**Farm Journal and Country Gentleman** ,1918

*Specifications and Drawings of Patents Relating to Electricity Issued by the U. S. ,*1886

**Catalogue ...** Montgomery Ward,1927

*Oregon Education Journal* ,1927

Country Life in America Liberty Hyde Bailey,Henry Hodgman Saylor,1910

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