

HOW TO USE

Five Minutes for Success

Welcome to *Primer*. I believe you will have a positive experience with the unique Math-U-See approach to teaching math. These first few pages explain the essence of the methodology, which has worked for thousands of students and teachers. I hope you will take five minutes and read through these steps carefully.

If you are using the program properly and still need additional help, you may visit us online at mathusee.com or call us at 888-854-6284.

–Steve Demme

Special Instructions for *Primer*

In *Primer* we are giving students a taste of several math concepts but not requiring them to master these concepts, so make it fun. Use the blocks as much as possible. Let the students develop a positive attitude towards numbers and number concepts as they are introduced to math for the first time. Attitudes are catching. As you and your student build with the blocks, play the games in the lessons, and enjoy the subject, it will set a positive tone for the class. The concepts taught in *Primer* will be introduced again and taught for mastery beginning in *Alpha*.

Support and Resources

Math-U-See has a number of resources to help you in the educational process.

Many of our customer service representatives have been with us for over 10 years. They are able to answer your questions, help you place your student in the appropriate level, and provide knowledgeable support throughout the school year.

Visit mathusee.com to use our many online resources, find out when we will be in your neighborhood, and connect with us on social media.

The Goal of Math-U-See

The underlying assumption or premise of Math-U-See is that the reason we study math is to apply math in everyday situations. Our goal is to help produce confident problem solvers who enjoy the study of math. These are students who learn their math facts, rules, and formulas and are able to use this knowledge to solve word problems and real-life applications. Therefore, the study of math is much more than simply committing to memory a list of facts. It includes memorization, but it also encompasses learning the underlying concepts of math that are critical to successful problem solving.

The Suggested 3-Step Math-U-See Approach

In order to train students to be confident problem solvers, here are the three steps that I suggest you use to get the most from Math-U-See *Primer*.

Step 1. Prepare for the lesson


Step 2. Present and explore the new concept together

Step 3. Practice for the student

Step 1. Prepare for the lesson

 Watch the video lesson to learn the new concept and see how to demonstrate this concept with the manipulatives when applicable. Study the written explanations and examples in the instruction manual.


Step 2. Present and explore the new concept together

 Present the new concept to your student. Have the student watch the video lesson with you, if you think it would be helpful. The following method should happen interactively.

- a. **Build:** Use the manipulatives to demonstrate and model problems from the instruction manual. If you need more examples, use the appropriate lesson practice pages.
- b. **Write:** Show the problems on paper as you build them with the blocks.
- c. **Say:** Talk through the math concept as you build and write.

Young children think differently than adults do. They need to see, touch, and build with concrete objects in order to understand. Movement is an important part of learning for young children because they take in information through their senses and their muscles. Use "Build, Write, Say" as long as necessary for the student to be comfortable with the new material. One of the joys of teaching is hearing a student say, "*Now I get it!*" or "*Now I see it!*"

Step 3. Practice for the Student

 Using the lesson practice problems from the student workbook, have students practice the new concept. Coach them through the building, writing, and saying process. Work together to do as many pages as necessary for the child to be

comfortable with the concept before moving to independent work. Do not be concerned if the student does not master a concept in *Primer*. All of the concepts introduced at this level will be taught again in future levels of Math-U-Sec. Use the application and enrichment pages for a variety of activities that reinforce the skills taught in *Primer*. You can also go to mathusee.com to find other resources.

Length of a Lesson

How long should a lesson take? This will vary from student to student and from topic to topic. You may spend a day on a new topic, or you may spend several days. There are so many factors that influence this process that it is impossible to predict the length of time from one lesson to another. If you move from lesson to lesson too quickly, the student will become overwhelmed and discouraged. If you move too slowly, your student may become bored and lose interest in math. I believe that as you regularly spend time working along with your student, you will sense when to proceed to the next topic.

Tell me, I forget. Show me, I understand. Let me do it, I remember.

–Ancient Proverb