



ARKS KEYS TO NUMERACY

FEELINGS ABOUT MATHS?

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I was off sick a lot, I was away from school when I was 10-11 years old and never caught up.

I never liked maths

I was good at primary school but got left behind when I changed schools and never caught up

I avoid numbers as much as possible

I always hated maths at school

Nobody noticed I was struggling with numbers. I wasn't given any extra help

I was always embarrassed when numbers came up in conversation, especially in the pub, and would leave the group if at all possible until the conversation changed



What do you think?

FEELINGS ABOUT MATHS

The following piece is taken from an American newspaper article describing one person's feelings about maths:

"I thought I had a terminal case of maths anxiety. For as long as I could remember I suffered from panic, embarrassment, resentment and self-loathing when faced with the simplest problem of mathematics. Quick! What is two-thirds of forty? I could scream at myself in the void where my brain was supposed to be. You can't do it! And then I would pull down the little window shade in my mind until the problem went away, or I begged someone else to solve it for me."

Do these feelings sound familiar? Have you ever felt like this about maths? Or have you always enjoyed maths and working with figures? Write a couple of sentences describing how you react when you come across maths in your life.

If you are working in a group, compare what you've written or discuss your feelings with friends or family. Do you have any feelings in common? If so what are they and what do they tell you about people's attitude to maths?

WAYS TO OVERCOME ANXIETY

If you feel anxious about maths and dealing with figures, how do you deal with your fears?

I cope with maths by:



What do you think?

Here are some ideas which have helped others:

- Maths is not a race. Take it slowly
- Do not assume you are wrong
- Seek help from someone supportive
- It is all right to get the answer wrong
- Don't avoid it, have a go. You might surprise yourself
- Don't be put off if you don't understand it straight away
- Learn the multiplication tables - they really will help
- Share experiences and feelings with others
- Concentrate on what you need to know
- Above all relax and learn to enjoy maths.

