

# Mathematics in Our World

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*Deep Run Elementary School  
Elkridge, Maryland*

“Pay attention, you’re going to use this information some day.” Instead of simply telling students that they will some day need their math skills in the real world, teachers at Deep Run Elementary School designed a way to show it. Students visit area businesses to engage in math activities, carrying a “passport” to collect stamps and show the tasks they completed.

The school’s Math Committee, composed of teachers, parents, administrators, and a representative from a local company, works with area businesses that Deep Run families visit regularly on a program that involves parents in their children’s math skills. At the beginning of the year, each student receives a passport and a ring with 15 cards containing activities to complete at each of the five businesses listed on the passport. Every card contains math activities for students in grades K-2 and students in grades 3-5. For example, one card might direct younger students to find a sale item and figure out the amount saved, while older students would need to determine the percentage of the savings. After completing the activity, students obtain a stamp from one of the business’s employees for their passports.

Students complete several additional activities after filling up their passports with stamps. They answer questions about math vocabulary and which skills they used for each activity. Once a quarter, they also use a poster, a cartoon, a short story, or another creative format to represent one of the math activities.

The Math Committee kicks off this program at the school’s annual Math Night in the fall. In addition to handing out the passports and activity cards to students, committee members explain the program to parents and encourage them to help their children participate. Each of the activity cards has hints so that parents who do not know the math skill can still help. The committee also mails a letter explaining the program to each student’s home.

Still in the early stages, Mathematics in Our World has lots of room for growth as it increases the number of business partners, math activities, and incentives for participation. Deep Run’s Math Committee is off to a great start, showing students the valuable connections between math and the real world.

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