

## DEPARTMENT NEWS

Webinar PD Series

Have you been interested in some of the professional development options listed in SIS but we haven't been able to schedule for me to visit your school/region? My plan is to offer some of those via as webinar. Please see the following offerings.

<http://elementary.conceptschools.org/category-3/>

Shortly before the date of the webinar, I will email you a link that directly connects you to our webinar tool, Zoom. Also, be sure to sign up on ConceptSIS so there is a log of your attendance and an opportunity for you to provide feedback.

Looking for something?...

Have you ever been to our Concept Schools departmental website?

<http://elementary.conceptschools.org/>

I have continued to update the site so that there is a common place you can find all the newsletters, sign-ups, resources, information, etc. Be sure to keep checking as I add more and more each week! Recently, I added items to the "Literacy Resources" including links to Guided Reading video.



Jennifer Sajovec  
Director of Primary Education (K-2)  
● sajovec@conceptschools.org  
● 847-824-3380 Ext. 246



FREE?!?!? (or really, really cheap)

## Tech Resources for Sight Words

Did you know that sight words (high-frequency words, Dolch words, etc.) are estimated to make up between 70-85% of elementary text?

## WEBSITES

## ABCYA!: Sight Word Bingo



[http://www.abcya.com/dolch\\_sight\\_word\\_bingo.htm](http://www.abcya.com/dolch_sight_word_bingo.htm)

Have students play online or project the games on a Smartboard! Offers the ability to select different levels of words (pre-primer, primer, etc.)

## Education.com



<https://www.education.com/games/sight-words/>

This site offers about 12 different sight words games for free.

## APPS

## Sight Words: Kids Learn



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sight-words-kids-learn/id472910871?mt=8>

The best feature of this app is that it allows students to practice "writing" sight words on their own!

## Hangman: Kids Learn Sight Words



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/hangman-kids-learn-sight-words/id555936003?mt=8>

This app is great for students ready to work on spelling sight words. You can choose different levels for the students.

## Sight Words by Photo Touch



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sight-words-by-photo-touch/id421341850?mt=8>

Students simply use a flash-card style format to tap and select the corresponding sight word.

## Sight Words Learning Games &amp; Reading Flash Cards



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sight-words-learning-games-reading-flash-cards/id518258478?mt=8>

Students can practice 220 Dolch words by playing 6 different games, including a game where they drag letters to help spell the words.

## Reading Eggs: Eggy 100HD



<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/eggy-100-hd/id533640641?mt=8>

The free version allows students to practice the first 100 words.

# Using Math Manipulatives

By Jennifer Sajovec

Every elementary teacher (and even higher grades) understands the importance of using hands-on tools. Manipulatives not only allow students to construct their own cognitive models for abstract mathematical ideas and processes, they also provide a common language with which to communicate these models to the teacher and other students. Essentially, manipulative help students move from concrete to representational to abstract math thinking.

## BUYING, FINDING AND MAKE MANIPULATIVES

It can take YEARS to build up enough manipulatives to fill those great organizers you see in school catalogues. If you are fortunate enough to find the funds, here are my top picks to have stocked in your room!

- Unifix cubes/snap cubes
- dice
- playing cards
- pattern blocks
- two-color counters

However, you can also stock your room with everyday, common items for much cheaper! Many years ago, I had the chance to attend a Math Their Way workshop. The best take-away was all creative “sources” for building a manipulative “library.”

### Make Your Own

#### Two-Color Beans

<http://lessonsbyolly.blogspot.com/2012/09/the-saga-of-bicolored-numeracy-beans.html>



#### Colored Pasta

(By FAR, the top favorite manipulative of all my classes, every year!)

<http://www.teaching-tiny-tots.com/toddler-math-colored-pasta.html>



#### Pony Bead Tools

<http://loriemilson.weebly.com/loris-blog/diy-math-tools>



#### Printable Math Manipulatives/Tools:

<http://jimmiescollage.com/ultimate-list-of-printable-math-manipulatives-games/>

#### More Ideas:

<http://www.homepreschool101.com/math-manipulatives-around-your-home/>  
<http://playgroundparkbench.com/affordable-math-manipulatives/>  
<http://www.weareteachers.com/17-teacher-tested-ways-to-find-free-or-cheap-stuff-for-your-classroom-2/>

## INTRODUCING MANIPULATIVES TO YOUR STUDENTS

First rule of manipulatives: kids will always want to play with manipulatives. They are brightly colored and just scream “build something with me!” So let’s talk about

how to structure things so that students move from using manipulatives as play things to math tools.

### Tip #1: Exploration Center Week

Instead of jumping right into the math curriculum at the beginning of the year, plan a week where students will rotate through different exploration centers where they can interact with all the different manipulatives in your classroom.

### Tip #2: Give Them Time

At the beginning of every lesson where you plan to use manipulatives, allow for a few minutes of free exploration. Here’s my standard script: “You will have 3 minutes to explore this tool. When that time is over, we will use these ONLY as a math tool based on the directions given. For those who use the math tool as instructed, you will get an additional two minutes at the end of the lesson as a reward.”

### #3: One and Done

This tip is simple; students get one warning about using the manipulatives as directed. If the student does not heed the warning, he/she no longer has the privilege of using the math tool.

## DISTRIBUTING AND COLLECTING MADE EASY

One thing that keeps us from regularly using manipulative is the thought of passing out just the right amount snap cubes, all in the same color (to prevent pattern-mania!)

### Tip #1:

Get students to help you organize the day or week before. Burn off some of that extra energy some of your kiddos have.

### Tip #2:

Ziplocs and small bins are your best friend! We almost always need things in sets of 10 so keep your tools pre-stored this way. Even when you need more, it’s much easier to grab two baggies than 20 counters.



### Tip #3

Put things back the way you intend to use them next time. Working on regrouping a few weeks after your place value unit? Make sure to have student connect their cubes back together in trains of 10.

## CONNECTING CONCRETE TO ABSTRACT

Remember, the goal of the manipulative is to transition students from concrete to abstract! Always, always, always do the extra steps to take students from 2 two Unifix blocks and 4 Unifix blocks makes 6 blocks to the abstract math problem of  $2 + 4 = 6$ . Additionally, it’s great to expose student to knowing what tools to use and when to use them. For example, if students have a page of mixed addition and subtraction problems to complete, show them how to select a specific manipulative and how to use it to solve those problems.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

<http://proudtobepimary.com/math-manipulatives/>  
<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/blog-posts/meghan-everette/math-manipulatives-learning-control-chaos/>

