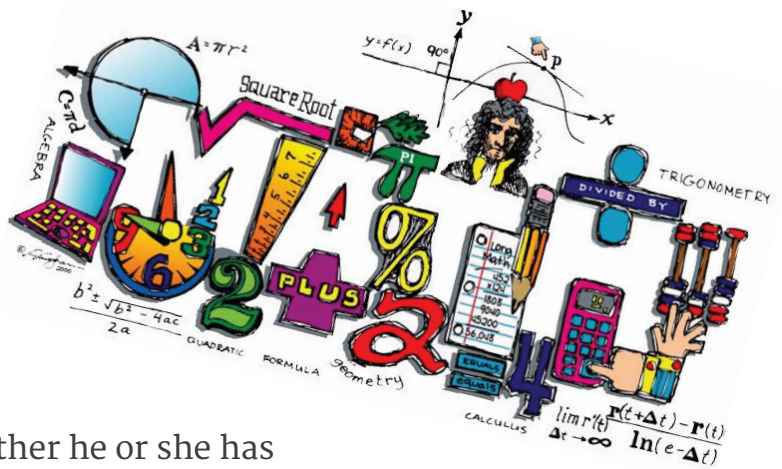


Excel in Mathematics

Can I excel in Mathematics, and **HOW** can I succeed?



Every learner longs to know whether he or she has the ability to excel in Mathematics. The million-dollar question is: How can I find the answer?

To start with, tests designed to measure mathematical ability or mathematical aptitude are supposed to measure a person's ability to relate abstraction to numbers. The calculations that you are required to do are supposed to give an indication of your mental, and, above all, your mathematical development. While it certainly makes a lot of sense to have yourself extensively tested by a psychologist to get some idea of what you could expect to achieve in a Mathematics class, this statement needs to be qualified.

Intelligence and aptitude tests can, to some extent, predict a learners' level of performance at school (including their achievement in Mathematics). However, if you are tested and your score is relatively low in (for example) the subtests Word Problems of the Individual Intelligence Test or Calculations in the Aptitude Tests, you may be told that you will probably not be able to excel in Mathematics. As a

result, those who are close to you will tend to assume that you are 'over-achieving' if you do excel. This assumption is wrong. The scores that you obtained in the IQ or aptitude tests do not necessarily indicate how you will perform in the Mathematics class, and even though similarities may occur between these scores and the Mathematics marks achieved, this is definitely not always the case. Learners who grew up in disadvantaged communities where they received little stimulation will most probably not be able to give good account of themselves when completing IQ or aptitude tests.

Mathematics is by far the most important subject for selection and gives you access to sought-after fields of study, and this is not likely to change in the foreseeable future. It is your survival kit for the future – choosing Mathematics as one of your subjects is a smart choice. I believe that the majority of children have the ability to pass Mathematics at the level required for

admission to the field of study they have chosen.

Let me explain: Even though not everyone will agree with this statement, I feel that it is fairly safe to assert (and the experts agree) that four out of every five children are indeed able to do Mathematics. What I am saying is not that every one of those learners will obtain an A for Grade 12 Mathematics, but that they can all pass at the level required for admission to their chosen fields of study.

Note that no learner should be 'written off' on account of his or her IQ or aptitude test results. Just as a high IQ and aptitude does not guarantee excellent results, a lower IQ and aptitude do not necessarily predict failure. The most reliable predictor of future achievement is not a high score in IQ or aptitude tests, but actual academic success.

In order to achieve this, it is of crucial importance to apply yourself to the study of Mathematics and to work not only hard, but also smartly and consistently. To find out what this means, I recommend that you visit the JT website (www.up.ac.za/juniortukkie) for the full articles on mathematical reasoning in English and Afrikaans.

I wish you only the best and leave you with the following message from Calvin Coolidge: "Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not: nothing is more common than unsuccessful persons with talent. Genius will not: unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not: the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent."

Finally: Do yourself a favour and do a Google search using the words "The Beatles in Hamburg." This story will explain why I place so much emphasis on commitment in the Mathematics class.



Prof Kobus Maree

Excel in Mathematics



The man behind the maths receives an excellence award

Prof Kobus Maree received the Psychological Society of South Africa's (PsySSA) Award for Excellence in Science during the 20th South African Psychology Congress on 18 September 2014.

The Award was made in recognition of his significant contributions to Psychological Science, including the national and global recognition he receives as a leading researcher, lecturer/teacher, scholar and thinker in career counselling, confirmed by his many scholarly publications (including books, book chapters and articles in leading national and international journals).

The award also recognises the multiple invitations he receives to deliver presentations locally and across the world. He is internationally recognised for his work in (storied) career counselling and in life designing, including the advancement of an integrated, qualitative and quantitative approach to career counselling and helping people overcome the shackles of a poor background and giving them hope.

