

Raytheon's MathMovesU Program – Questions & Answers

Q: What is MathMovesU?

A: This innovative program was designed by Raytheon to keep 11-13 year-old students interested in math at an age when their interest in the subject typically drops. MathMovesU helps connect middle school students to math on their own terms. It does this by using their mediums and engaging them in fun contests, live events and interactive Web content. The program website is www.MathMovesU.com

Q: How does MathMovesU work?

A: Kids who visit www.MathMovesU.com can participate in math-related contests, win a host of cool prizes, and apply for individual scholarships and grants for their schools.

Q: What is the goal of MathMovesU?

A: The goal of MathMovesU is to help remedy the current math education crisis in the United States. Raytheon is helping to make math cool for students by illustrating the connection between math and "cool" careers. By improving math's image, MathMovesU seeks to keep middle school students interested in educational tracks that will one day lead to careers in science and engineering.

Q: What is the "math education crisis" in America?

A: The U.S. ranks 24th out of 29 countries in math literacy.¹ Only 32 percent of American eighth-graders are at or above a proficient level in math.² Looking at U.S. student performance on international assessments, the average student begins on top of the world in mathematics in elementary school, slips to near the middle of the pack by eighth grade, and sinks to near the bottom by 12th grade.³ Middle school, therefore, is clearly when both interest and achievement decline.

Q: I understand surveys were conducted in conjunction with this program. What was their purpose?

A: In 2005, Raytheon engaged KRC Research to survey more than 1,000 students between the ages of 11 and 13. The company wanted to understand the middle school mindset about math, including why students lose interest in the subject during this time. In 2007, Raytheon again worked with KRC Research; this time 354 parents and 356 "tweens" were surveyed. The purpose of the second survey was to discover what happens to kids' math skills during summer vacation.

Q: What did the surveys find?

A: The survey in 2005 found that most American middle school students would rather clean their rooms, eat their vegetables, take out the garbage or go to the dentist than sit down with their math homework. Yet these same sixth, seventh and eighth graders said they wanted to do better in math (67%) and that doing well in math was important to them (94%).

Go Figure.

www.MathMovesU.com



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The majority of middle school students reported they would be more interested in math if they learned about celebrities (79%) or were shown how people in music and sports use math in their jobs (81%).

The survey in 2007 found that 76 percent of students said math skills would be “very” or “somewhat” important to their jobs when they finished school. The research also showed that half of the “tweens” believe they should study math at least once a week during the summer months. When given the choice, 54 percent of middle schoolers said they would rather play Internet math contests to win prizes as a way to keep their math skills sharp over the summer. Other less-popular choices were playing educational family games, spending time with textbooks, private tutoring, and attending math camp or summer school.

Q: Why is improving math education important?

A: According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the demand for new products and new technology is expected to continue to drive growth in computer and engineering occupations.

Q: What is Raytheon Company?

A: Raytheon Company is a technology leader specializing in defense, homeland security and other government markets throughout the world. With a history of innovation spanning 85 years, Raytheon provides state-of-the-art electronics, mission systems integration and other capabilities in the areas of sensing; effects; and command, control, communications and intelligence systems. Raytheon also offers a broad range of mission support services.

Q: Why does Raytheon sponsor MathMovesU?

A: Raytheon employs 73,000 engineers and professionals who rely on strong math skills every day. Because today's young students are the employment pipeline of tomorrow, it is important to Raytheon that middle school students succeed at math.

¹ *International Outcomes of Learning in Mathematics Literacy and Problem Solving: PISA 2003 Results From the U.S. Perspective* (NCES 2005-003). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics.

² *National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2007 Mathematics Assessment* (NCES 2007-494). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics.

³ *A Commitment to America's Future: Responding to the Crisis in Mathematics and Science Education* (Main Report, 2005). Business-Higher Education Forum.