

More 9 year old [maths](#) A-graders in the making?

May 2009 – A clever new gadget designed by a British inventor and sold exclusively through www.zoobookoo.com could spell the end of the trauma of learning the [times tables](#). The Maths Wrap, an iPod-sized device that feels like a game, gives children a hands-on way to learn the process of multiplication. Our children will probably not be making an A-grade [maths](#) A-level pass at the tender age of 9 like the incredible [Zohaib Ahmed](#) this March, but we can help them master their tables.

Suitable for children aged five to 12, with particular benefit for key stage two, the [Maths Wrap](#) was created to give children a more dynamic way of learning a core maths skill. “Some children struggle to learn times tables from books. I wanted to give them something they could actually hold and play with,” explains Maths Wrap inventor Simon Deacon, a maths tutor and formal naval engineer.

[Maths Wrap](#) uses the principles of kinaesthetic education: learning by doing something physical. “By using their hands, children are better able to process information and see patterns of numbers in the tables they’re learning. This ‘doing and seeing approach’ works far better for many children,” explains Deacon.

How it works

The Maths Wrap’s simple rectangular design has numbered notches down two sides with a cord attached to it. The *classic version* comes with 12 cards that slot into the device to test different times tables (£6.35). The *deluxe edition* also includes cards for fractions, decimals, percentages, addition and subtraction (£9.99).

It’s simple and fun to use – Wrap it! Flip It! Check it! Choose a times table to practice. Insert the card into the top slot. Wind the cord around Maths Wrap so that you link the questions to the right answer. Turn it over to see how you did.

For example, if doing your four-times table, you will slot the cord into notch 1 on the top of the device and through the answer notch numbered 4 on the bottom. Wind the string around the back and put it into the second slot numbered 2 at the top and 8 at the bottom; the third through 3 and 12, and so on. Once completed, you flip the Maths Wrap over and see whether the string creates the same pattern as that shown in the window. If it matches, you’ve got it right – now go for speed! If not, unwind it and try again.

[ZooBookKoo](#), a family run business that manufactures, distributes and exports a range of quirky, fun, educational products, expects the Maths Wrap to be a top seller. “Multiplication tables are the building blocks of mathematics. Children who are confident with them find it

easier to master complex problems like division and algebra. The Maths Wrap makes learning fun and seem like a game, rather than a tedious homework chore.”

Maths Wrap has already won the approval of many teachers and some schools have started to invest in them. “It will transform the learning of multiplication tables for children, both at home and in the classroom,” says Claire Davis, a Warrington deputy head. [Class packs](#) are available.

Parents agree. “My five year old son has barely started doing multiplication at school, but after just one attempt with the Maths Wrap, the concept of multiplying by two started to sink in. He thought it was a great game and had no idea what a valuable skill he was learning,” says mother of two, Melissa Talago.

Maths Wrap is one of many fun learning products sold by www.zoobookoo.com, which also sells [Magic Place Mats](#) and [Dice Game](#) for mathematics.

~ENDS~

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Kinaesthetic learning

Some experts estimate that half of all children are kinaesthetic learners. Professor Rita Dunn, of St John’s University New York, is one of the world’s leading experts on kinaesthetic learning (also called ‘tactual learning’). She says: “Many (children) must write or use their fingers in some manipulative way to help them remember basic facts.” But it’s not just kinaesthetic learners who benefit from hands-on learning. In an online article, Professor Dunn says: “In 2000, O’Connell McManus reported that achieving high school students mastered required curriculum with statistically higher test scores when using tactual resources, than they did when taught traditionally.” To read the whole article, [click here](#).

Maths teaching in the UK

On September 19, 2008, an Ofsted report criticised maths lessons in the UK: nearly half of all lessons are not good enough, and children are failing to grasp basic mathematical concepts. The report said: “Evidence suggest that strategies to improve test and examination performance, including ‘booster’ lessons, revision classes and extensive intervention, coupled with a heavy emphasis on ‘teaching to test’, succeed in preparing pupils to gain the qualifications, but are not equipping them well enough for their futures.” The government has announced it will introduce a range of measures, backed by £240m, to transform the standard of maths teaching in this country.

Contact information

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January 2010

