

Re: Math is not a memoriter course.

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2007-08/msg04139.html>

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  - *Date:* 24 Aug 2007 13:49:34 -0400
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In article <1187966095.414568.184130@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>, <aatu.koskensilta@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Someone wrote:

Do they really believe that it could possibly do more harm to the student than would be done over a lifetime by not knowing the single digit multiplication facts?

Why do they have to know the single digit multiplication facts? I often do base 16 computations, and I have made no attempt to memorize its multiplication table.

In fact, one the touted methods of teaching, Chisenbop, only assumes that multiplication by 1, 2, 5, and 10 are memorized, and uses the distributive law for the rest. Since multiplying by 5 is essentially dividing by 2, not too much has to be learned. But the only thing gained by learning tables is speed; why do we not have children memorize the tables to 100 or 1000?

I have no idea where you get the idea that children aren't taught the multiplication table. I also find I have not been horribly harmed by not knowing the multiplication table.

See the above. Napier's "bones" were devices for people who could add but not multiply. But computers and calculators are even faster.

There are real problems with mathematics education today — some quite widespread, some specific to certain countries —, and it would be more sensible to concentrate on those, instead of ranting on imaginary ills.

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Students do not understand any of the concepts involved with the integers, and cannot formulate problems. This is FAR more important than knowing how to solve standard problems; anything which is learned about solving problems below the graduate level can NOW be done by machine.

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This address is for information only. I do not claim that these views are those of the Statistics Department or of Purdue University.  
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