

Reviewed by: John Dabell

“ I’ve been a big fan and user of Prim-Ed’s Comprehension Box for years and I always hoped the company would have plans for making a maths version. *And here it is!* ”

This series of six boxes (covering Years 1-6) has been created to support the new maths curriculum, with at least one card for each programme of study objective. These cards explode with colour and include illustrations, cartoons and photographs; the artwork isn’t just decorative, though. In many cases it is integral to completing the activities.

The colours on the cards indicate to which strand and sub-strand of the maths curriculum they belong. There are also numbers that point to the difficulty of the concepts involved. Those at the front of the box are generally easier than those at the back, but you can pick and mix however you see fit, according to each child’s needs.

Questions are well thought-out – some are knowledge-based while other are more probing. They manage to address common misconceptions too. For example, one of the geometry cards relates to real-life angles using the context of an architect’s plans. It asks whether an angle is bigger or smaller depending on whether it has longer or shorter ‘arms’. Many children commonly see angles drawn with longer arms as being bigger, so this card provides an opportunity to unearth their knowledge and understanding, and gives you the chance to assess and plan a follow up.

The materials are well written and focus on key areas that often present themselves as

obstacles to learning. Questions include multiple choice, yes/no, true/false or single-word answers and children write their responses on a recording sheet. This makes the resource great for solo working. Pupils can then mark their work by locating a corresponding answer card in the box. Teacher input is still vital, however, to make sure that children are marking their work honestly.

After pupils have answered all the questions and their work has been checked, they can look at the ‘ADDITIONAL activities’ found on every card. These are mostly self marked and provide further challenge or extend the concepts.

With each box of cards there is the all-important Teacher’s Guide to help structure the activities. This includes explanations of the different activities; photocopyables; practice and extension activities; tracking and recording sheets; colour posters; a glossary; a scope and sequence chart and information about how to use and organise the box in class.



Reviewed by: Jane Hainsworth, Headteacher.  
Adel St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School

“ The Maths Box is a great innovative resource, which compliments the creative approach we consider key to children’s learning. It encourages resilience, independence and confidence in maths learning, as children can’t wait to try new cards and better their score. The high quality resources are colourful, images appealing and our children see them as a fun activity and not necessarily school work. ”

Our teachers use The Maths Box in a variety of ways, as part of a targeted intervention, independent extension, consolidating activity or short assessment. Our children can work independently, or in small groups.

We bought the complete maths box series and its flexibility makes it an invaluable resource, as well as great value for money. Teachers can choose from different year group boxes to revisit previously taught objectives, or create

opportunities to challenge high achievers. The use of multiple choice questions makes pupils’ understanding or misconceptions very clear, and the separate answer cards offer independence to even our youngest of learners.

Our children can’t wait to use The Maths Box. As with all the Prim-Ed resources we use, they offer a great product for teachers and children.

Reviewed by: Emer O'Reilly (Maths Subject Lead)

“ The Maths Box has been a resolute success in our classrooms. As the children were familiar with the Comprehension Box, they were eager to work on the Maths Boxes too.

Children at Kilburn Park School make outstanding progress in maths, particularly in arithmetic. In addition to our book-based maths lessons, children receive rapid recall lessons three times per week. At Kilburn Park we teach a mastery-based curriculum, a key resource that contributes to the success of these lessons has been the set of Maths Boxes, each of which helps teachers to provide comprehensive practice in the key areas of numeracy, especially reasoning. Each card in the boxes clearly matches the National Curriculum objectives for each year group. The innovative nature of the resource

The Maths Box consists of two copies of cards that are divided into five strands - Number, Algebra, Shape and Space, Measures and Data. Number and Measures are divided into strand units too. There are a number of cards available for each strand.

The Maths Box has been a resolute success in our classrooms. As the children were familiar with the Comprehension Box, they were eager to work on the Maths Boxes too.

There are a collection of motivating activities, supported by colourful illustrations and photographs, which in turn encourages the pupils to engage in independent and collaborative learning. The cards consolidate skills and give an opportunity for further practise and challenge in various areas of the maths curriculum.

The impact on learning and the work of the teacher in the classroom, to what extent and in which areas: In Kilburn Park, where challenge in maths is a focus, we decided to give each year group the maths box for the year group above; for example, Year 5 would get Maths Box 6. Teachers tend to use the cards for challenge within lessons, at the end of a topic to build on what was covered in lessons and promote mastery in previous concepts covered.

The children enjoy working with the cards, it is a great independent learning activity, and as there are two of each card the children can also work collaboratively. Initially, the language used in the cards was difficult for the children to interpret and they required support for some of the questions. However, when some of the language of the cards was discussed, children in Kilburn Park have become more comfortable with it. It has been very apparent that the more the children worked with the cards, the more literate they became in understanding the question types etc.

In addition, the record sheets at the back of the teacher manual promote autonomous learning.

How the resource supports or enhances the everyday life of teachers, pupils or schools One of the key advantages of this resource is its flexibility in that it can be used to provide:

- for children to work independently for a sustained period of time;
- challenging activities for children to apply mathematical skills and knowledge;
- opportunities for children to peer assess and self-assess their learning and to become autonomous learners; and
- encouragement for pupils to apply their knowledge of mathematical concepts in a variety of contexts.

Each teachers guide provides a chart which details the curriculum objectives covered by each card. It also gives various guidance and tips on how to use the boxes within the classroom to support your teaching. The tracking and recording sheets are exceptionally beneficial in order for pupils and teachers alike to evidence assessment. There is also a list of equipment listed that the pupils may require in order to support their answering of some of the cards. In particular, the full colour posters are useful to aid the teaching of the card content, especially when the children initially start completing the cards. Most teachers have found it a valuable resource when delivering challenge to higher achievers during sessions. They use them both as a resource in their teaching and also as part of a range of activities to engage children not being directly supported by an adult.

Cost effectiveness in terms of educational aims and results - not just price. The Maths Boxes are used in all classrooms throughout the school, children find them bright, colourful and engaging. Once they understand what is expected of them they quickly settle to the task. They are motivated to successfully complete one card, mark it and move on to the next. At present, the pressure on teachers to deliver quality maths learning to children, often with a wide ability range and cultural background, is high. The Maths Box is a resource that quickly allows them to match activities to children's needs whilst still providing that element of challenge to ensure that all children are making substantive progress.



## The Verdict

The Maths Box delivers a diverse range of inspiring activities supported by fantastically engaging artwork that is tailor-made for the new curriculum. The cards are easy to use and would suit independent learning, small-group work or whole-class contexts.

Given that you can use the cards over and over again, the boxes are great value for money. It's a mathematically accurate and clever series of resources that add dollops of colour and excitement to children's maths learning.