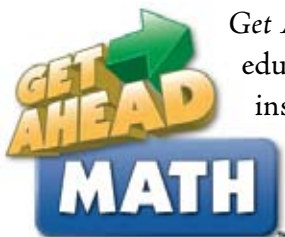


The Research-Based Foundation of *Get Ahead Math*™



Get Ahead Math is a discrete educational software (DES). This category of educational technology includes integrated learning systems, computer-assisted instruction (CAI), and computer-based instruction (CBI) that teachers have used for more than 20 years in classrooms, as well as a host of new software programs designed to teach students core subjects such as reading and mathematics. Research syntheses that have examined the effectiveness of earlier versions of DES programs have found a positive association between software use and student achievement (e.g., Kulik & Kulik, 1991; Kulik, 1994; Fletcher-Flinn & Gravatt, 1995; Ryan, 1991). In addition, a series of meta-analyses have been performed since the late 1980s to examine the association between computer-assisted instruction and achievement (e.g., Kulik, Kulik, & Bangert-Drowns, 1984; Niemic & Walberg, 1985; Kulik & Kulik, 1991; Kulik, 1994). Nearly all of these studies concluded that discrete educational software was as effective as other educational interventions widely believed to be effective, including reducing class size and providing feedback to students on their performance to improve achievement.

The typology of DES, as derived from Foshay (2000), emphasizes four primary uses for software: to introduce new material, to supplement regular classroom instruction, to supplant or replace direct instruction, and to make new learning opportunities available to students through the unique affordances of the software. *Get Ahead Math* covers these primary uses. New material is introduced through the video tutorials and step-by-step examples that allow students to grasp material at their own pace. Aligned to state standards, the software can be used to review and reinforce content presented in the classroom. Through direct instruction, practice, and assessment, *Get Ahead Math* can be used to supplant regular classroom instruction. Finally, *Get Ahead Math* employs a system of immediate feedback and positive rewards that provides students with a personal and unique learning opportunity.

The Get Ahead 4-Step Learning Method™

Get Ahead Math is designed to be an effective tool to increase student achievement because the software is based on the sequential steps of the learning cycle to ensure that students understand key math concepts. Cognitive psychologists have confirmed that there are three basic modalities to process information into memory: visual (learning by seeing), auditory (learning by hearing), and kinesthetic (learning by doing).

The Get Ahead 4-Step Learning Method covers the three learning modalities to ensure that the most effective learning takes place. Students learn the concepts by (1) watching video tutorials (learning by seeing/hearing), (2) working through step-by-step examples (learning by seeing), (3) practicing on the worksheets (learning by doing), and (4) testing their skill by taking assessment quizzes and tests. Thus, the Get Ahead 4-Step Learning Method provides students with the necessary instruction, practice, and assessment to master the foundation skills required for each student in grades 3-8, including Algebra I.

Works Cited

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