

Parent Documents

What is Mathseeds?

Mathseeds is a comprehensive online mathematics program for children aged 3-6. It offers a huge range of carefully structured lessons and activities that build mathematical skills over a broad range of number, shape and measurement topics. The Mathseeds program is packed full of enjoyable child-focused activities that makes learning a rewarding and meaningful experience. It teaches fundamental concepts in a fun, motivating and engaging way, whilst rewarding children for their efforts.

Why am I using Reading Eggs?

Mathseeds is a great way for students to review concepts that have been learned in a variety of ways. This includes interactive games with sound and animation. Many kids find this style of learning to be very enjoyable and it is a great alternative to solely providing worksheets. In distance education settings where the use of manipulatives may be hindered by lack of resources / funding, this would allow the students a place to “play” with their math and have it feel more hands on.

Risks that could arise

Some personal information is necessary to create a Mathseeds account. This can be limited to first name and last initial. The teacher sets up the student accounts and then the students log in through the classroom (teacher). The teacher is the only person who has an email associated with the account (classroom) and student completion is stored for monitoring by teacher.

What’s ‘personal information’?

“People have different standards of what they consider ‘personal’ information. Sharing over social media has done a fair bit to reset our expectation. Regardless of personal definition, if the information, data, or content could be used to identify you, it’s ‘personal information’ – though professional or business contact information may be treated separately.”¹(Hengstler, 2013). A student’s personal information could include: name, date of birth, address, telephone number, email address, educational information, and anything that identifies an individual, including photographs. If any information, data or content could be used to identify you it is then qualified as “personal information”.

Why is BC so sensitive to privacy laws regarding data?

“Shortly after the 9/11 attacks on the US in 2001, the American government enacted the United States Patriot Act that allowed the United States government to search private and public data housed on servers on United States soil. At the time, The BC Medical Services Plan was hosting our provincial medical records in the United States. Unions in BC expressed concern over the ability of the American government to search through British Columbian’s personal medical records and histories. Ultimately, the rules is: if you transfer or authorize the transfer of your personal information outside of Canada, that data is subject to the laws and practices of the country where it sits – be it the United States, China, or India. (Remember that minors, under the legal care of an adult, cannot authorize such a transfer.) Not all locations have similar notions about your right to privacy. Since cloud computing is a relatively new technology, the laws and best practices governing it are still changing and there is a need to stay current.”¹(Hengstler, 2013)

Why is a consent form necessary?

Various provinces in Canada – and other jurisdictions across the world – have enacted laws to protect personal privacy. In BC, the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) covers all independent schools. It is one of the most defined privacy protection frameworks in Canada. PIPA states that ‘private bodies’ such as independent schools have defined legal requirements for handling your personal information when it is within their ‘custody’ and ‘control’. Generally, private bodies must make sure that your personal information cannot be stored or accessed outside of Canada without your expressed permission – ‘consent’ (Note: there are certain expectations in the law like data covered by treaties, etc.). PIPA states that your consent must be in writing, state to whom your personal information may be disclosed, and how your information will be used. Also, if you post personal information about others, their permission must also be secured.

What if I don’t want to consent?

You have the right as a parent/guardian to withhold consent to your child using Mathseeds. Alternate activities will be provided to students in the event that parents/caregivers choose to withhold consent and that selection of an alternate activity will not affect a student’s grade.

^[1] Julia Hengstler is the Educational Technologist with the Faculty of Education at Vancouver Island University & an Instructor in Educational Technology. Please visit this site for more background information about her: http://www.viu.ca/education/faculty/profiles/hengstler_j.asp