Guidance for Use and Getting Started

Principles and general outline for use

There are no set rules as different circumstances require different approaches. The amount of time available and reasons for using it will govern usage.

It might be used daily, weekly, twice weekly, at weekends or over a discrete period of time as a 'block project'. It could also be used in, e.g. spring or summer break.

Look at these 2 extremes:

- if to be used to **fill in 'emergency gaps'** for an older (e.g. G6/7+) student, it might be used as an intense, daily program over a period of weeks or months
- if to be used to **fast-track** a younger (e.g. G4/5) student, it could be a summer project, or run alongside another math scheme over a year or more as a supplement

✱ *Key principles*

Regular use: *think through your time frame carefully*
Repetition: *keep coming back to skills until they are firmly in place*
Revisiting: *even after 'Achieving' a skill, after a while go back to it and check it is still hot – maybe have a session every 2 or 3 weeks devoted to revisiting 'old' skills*
Variety: *change the focus and activity style within the same session*
Fun: *have fun wherever possible, or at least a 'fun' (lighter) activity somewhere in the middle or towards the end of a session*
Small bites and appropriate pace: *'go' with the student*
Building up confidence: *through revisiting the achieved 'I CAN / I KNOW' skills and loading on praise*

Using the work / teaching pages

There are four main Units, plus **FLASH FACTS**☆:

- **Number**
- **Fractions, Decimals and Percentages**
- **Shape and Geometry**
- **Times Tables, Exponents and Prime Numbers**
- **FLASH FACTS☆: Fun, fast-response Q and A, based on concepts from all four Units**

Each page follows the same **four-step** format for the student and 'helper' to work through methodically together:

Step 1
The learning objective: identified in the title, always starting with 'I CAN' or 'I KNOW'. Make a point of **slowly reading the title statement out loud** before starting on the content, so it is absolutely clear what the learning objective is; (after completing the page, ask the student if s/he can say what the 'I CAN' or 'I KNOW' skill was).

Step 2
The explanation: short and as simple as possible, but should be read slowly, carefully and thoroughly **without skipping sentences or taking short cuts**. Each detail is important; it may be necessary to work through and discuss it more than once before moving on.

Step 3
Eight 'Try' questions: the student and helper then work through **eight 'try' questions** which follow on the *same* page **using the explanation section as 'hold your hand' reference and guidance**. If revisiting a page, even though there are only eight questions, it is unusual that a student remembers them; doing the examples in random order is helpful. Do have the student make up two similar questions for the helper to solve, as making up appropriate questions shows sound understanding.

Step 4
Eight 'Test' questions: when the student understands and feels ready, s/he **turns over** to the *back* of the page to find **eight 'test' questions** to complete **without referring to the explanation, guidance or examples**. Answers are provided, but these should be covered with, e.g. a ruler or piece of card, and only revealed after answering either orally or on paper. It should not be viewed as a pass or fail 'test', but simply an opportunity to see if the 'I CAN / I KNOW' skill has sunk in; if it hasn't, then revisit another time when other skills are in place.

* ***Unit 4, the Times Tables, Exponents and Prime Numbers Unit****, has a slightly different format, but is still simple and methodical to use;* ***step by step guidance for use (a 'must-read')*** *is provided at the start. If Times Tables knowledge is very weak, it is a good idea to make an early start here.*

* *The final section is* **FLASH FACTS** ☆ *: a list of* ***rapid-response questions, answers and quick activities****, confirming the student's understanding of essential must-know facts; a randomly ordered collection of concepts, skills and tricks from Units 1 – 4. This section also has* ***'must-read' step by step guidance*** *at the start.*

Record keeping

'I CAN / I KNOW' checklists: a skills checklist is provided at the start of each Unit and should be used as a simple record keeping system to show **how many times** and **when** a skill is visited. There is a place to record 'Achieved' status, to record when the student and helper decide that the skill / concept is **fully in place**.

'Achieved' status: the checklists are helpful to refer to when the student is applying him/herself to other math activities, e.g. school homework, as they can see that there is ***proof*** **that they** ***do have*** **the skill required** to solve a problem, as the 'I CAN / I KNOW' chart says so...

...the skill is in the head somewhere, and just needs ***'fishing out'****.*
This encourages ownership and responsibility for learning.

* ***For maximum learning impact:***
  - *read out loud and discuss the* ***'I CAN / I KNOW' statement*** *before starting a work page*
  - *repeat before the 8 'try' questions*
  - *repeat before the 8 'test' questions*
  - *and finally, repeat once more at the end – then discuss progress / success*

  This helps the student be ***crystal clear about the learning objective****, tune in, focus and take* ***ownership*** *of the learning process.* ***The student him/herself*** *should tick the 'Achieved' box on the record chart.*

Also consider devising your own simple system to show when understanding of a skill is still weak, 'getting there' or good. An easy and quick system is to use **traffic light colours**: a small red circle in the corner of the page for 'weak', yellow for 'getting there' and green for 'good'. This serves as an instant visual sign to show which pages need more attention / revisiting.