

## 《Should we fear maths? 我们有必要害怕数学吗？》

### 随身英语

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并非人人都喜欢或懂得数学。自上学起，不少人就开始害怕这门科目，并且从未克服这种感觉。究竟是什么让我们对数字产生恐惧？怎样才能战胜这种心理？听“随身英语”节目探讨人们惧怕数学的原因和改变这种心态的方法。

词汇：maths 数学

How good are you at maths? Some people love the challenge of algebra or enjoy working out number puzzles such as Sudoku. Maths is all around us, from working out how to split the bill after a meal, to calculating your household bills. But many dread the moment when they have to deal with numbers and figures and feel a real sense of worry and confusion. It can seem daunting, but this ‘maths anxiety’ is perfectly normal, and you’re definitely not alone. And anyway, our worries and fears don’t necessarily reflect our ability.

The problem really starts in childhood, at school. Research has found that maths teachers who are nervous about teaching the subject can pass on their anxiety to the pupils, and girls may be more likely to be affected. The Programme for International Student Assessment found around 31% of 15 and 16-year-olds across 34 countries said they got very nervous doing maths problems, 33% said they got tense doing maths homework, and nearly 60% said they worried maths classes would be difficult. Shulamit Kahn, from Boston University’s Questrom School of Business, told the BBC she believes giving students, particularly girls, good role models “is critical, especially at a young age”. She thinks the key is to get people, especially women, who love teaching maths to younger children.

Writing for BBC Future, David Robson says “It’s not clear why maths arouses so

much fear compared to geography. But the fact that there 's a right or wrong answer – there 's no room for bluffing – might make you more worried about underperforming. ” And once we assume we 're not a ‘ maths person ’ , we avoid solving things that we probably could do.

Psychologists have been trying to work out why mental arithmetic can bring us out in a sweat. That seed of fear may come from many sources, but some suggest that articulating your fears can loosen their hold on you, and encourage children to see a maths test as a challenge, not a threat. Ideally, we need to think positively about maths and give it a second chance.

## 词汇表

algebra 代数

puzzle 谜题，智力游戏

Sudoku 数独游戏

split the bill 分摊费用

calculate 计算

figures 数字

maths anxiety 数学焦虑症

ability 能力

nervous 紧张的，担忧的

problem 习题，问题

homework 家庭作业

role model 榜样

bluff 蒙混过关

underperform 表现不佳

solve 解决

mental arithmetic 心算

articulate 清楚表达

challenge 挑战

a second chance 第二次机会

## 测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. When does maths anxiety really begin?

2. What can happen if teachers are nervous about teaching maths?

3. True or false? If we don 't like maths, we are unable to solve mathematical problems.



the pupils.

3. True or false? If we don't like maths, we are unable to solve mathematical problems.

False. We assume if we're not a 'maths person', we avoid solving things that we probably could do.

4. How should children view a maths test?

Children should be encouraged to see a maths test as a challenge, not a threat.

5. What does Shulamit Kahn think should be done to help children enjoy maths?

She thinks the key is to get people, especially women who love maths, teaching younger children.

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. According to my figures, we've actually made a profit this year.

2. You can't afford to pay for us both so let's split the bill.

3. I've calculated how much you owe me for the shopping – it's 20 pounds!

4. Climbing the mountain was a real challenge, but it was worth it when I got to the top.

5. I am useless at mental arithmetic, so I always use a calculator.