



## Why Is Math So Hard For Some Children?: The Nature and Origins of Mathematical Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

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### **Why Is Math So Hard For Some Children?: The Nature and Origins of Mathematical Learning Difficulties and Disabilities** From Brookes Publishing

*Why Is Math So Hard for Some Children?* is the first definitive research volume that explores the evidence base for students' difficulties with mathematics. This landmark resource gives educational decision makers and researchers in-depth theoretical and practical insight into mathematical learning difficulties and disabilities, combining diverse perspectives from fields such as special education, educational psychology, developmental psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and behavioral genetics. More than 35 internationally known contributors share their expertise on

- indicators of mathematical difficulties and disabilities
- risk factors for poor mathematics outcomes
- connections between mathematics and reading disabilities
- neuropsychological factors in mathematical learning disabilities
- information processing deficits
- individual difference factors in mathematics difficulties
- math anxiety
- the role of genetics
- effective instructional interventions

Comprehensive and multidisciplinary, this book gives readers the foundation they need to advance research, teaching strategies, and policies that identify struggling students and help put them on the path to stronger math skills.

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### Editorial Review

Review

"Represents seminal work on understanding mathematical learning difficulties and disabilities."

(Asha Jitendra)

About the Author

Professor of Pediatrics and Associate Director, Center for Academic and Reading Skills, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, 7000 Fannin, UCT 2487, Houston, TX 77005. For the past 25 years, Dr. Fletcher, a child neuropsychologist, has conducted research on many aspects of the development of reading, language, and other cognitive skills in children. He has worked extensively on issues related to learning and attention problems, including definition and classification, neurobiological correlates, and, most recently, intervention.

**Douglas Fuchs, Ph.D.**, Nicholas Hobbs Professor of Special Education and Human Development, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, Department of Special Education, 110 Magnolia Circle, Room 417C, Nashville, TN 37203. Dr. Fuchs is a former classroom teacher, special educator, and school psychologist. He directed the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Reading Clinic for 12 years. His current interests include reading and math disabilities, intensive instruction, service delivery options, urban education, and education policy.

**Lynn S. Fuchs, Ph.D.**, Nicholas Hobbs Professor of Special Education and Human Development, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University, Department of Special Education, 110 Magnolia Circle, Room 417C, Nashville, TN 37203. Dr. Fuchs's research addresses teachers' use of classroom-based assessment information and instructional practices for improving reading and mathematics performance.

In addition to his work at the Instructional Research Group, Dr. Gersten is also a professor emeritus in the College of Education at the University of Oregon. He is the director of the Math Strand for the Center on Instruction, the director of research for the Regional Educational Laboratory-South West, and the principal investigator for several What Works Clearinghouse projects. As Project Director of the Teacher Quality Distribution and Measurement Study, Dr. Gersten is currently working with a team of researchers from Harvard University to revise a mathematics observation measure that will be used to determine the effect of professional development on teachers' mathematics instruction. He is also a coauthor of a mathematics screening and progress monitoring measure for kindergarten and first-grade students that is in press. His main areas of expertise include evaluation methodology and instructional research on students with learning disabilities, mathematics, and reading comprehension. Dr. Gersten has conducted numerous randomized trials, many of which have been published in major scientific journals in the field. He has either directed or

codirected 42 applied research grants addressing a wide array of issues in education and has been a recipient of many federal and nonfederal grants (more than \$20 million). He has advised on a variety of reading and mathematics projects using randomized trials in education settings and has written extensively about the importance of randomized trials in special education research.

In 2002, Dr. Gersten received the Distinguished Special Education Researcher Award from the American Educational Research Association's Special Education Research Division. He served as a member of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, a Presidential committee to develop researchbased policy in mathematics for American schools. Dr. Gersten also chaired the Panel that developed A Practice Guide on Response to Intervention in Mathematics for the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

Herbert P. Ginsburg, the Jacob H. Schiff Professor of Psychology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, has conducted basic research on the development of mathematical thinking, with particular attention to young children and disadvantaged populations. He has drawn on cognitive developmental research to develop a mathematics curriculum, *Big Math for Little Kids*.

**Nancy C. Jordan** is Principal Investigator of the Number Sense Intervention Project (funded by the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) as well as the Center for Improving Learning of Fractions (funded by the Institute of Educational Sciences). She is author or coauthor of many articles in mathematics learning difficulties and has recently published articles in *Child Development*, *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *Developmental Science*, *Developmental Psychology*, and *Journal of Educational Psychology*. Dr. Jordan holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa, where she was awarded Phi Beta Kappa, and a master's degree from Northwestern University. She received her doctoral degree in education from Harvard University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Chicago. Before beginning her doctoral studies, she taught elementary school children with special needs. Dr. Jordan served on the Committee on Early Childhood Mathematics of the National Research Council of the National Academies.

**Stephen A. Petrill, Ph.D.**, Professor, Department of Psychology, The Ohio State University, 1830 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210.

Dr. Petrill's research focuses on the genetic, neurobiological, cognitive, and environmental underpinnings of dyslexia, language impairment, and math disabilities. In particular, he examines how these approaches explain the comorbidity and independence among different types of learning difficulties and their relationship to the typical range.

**H. Lee Swanson, Ph.D.**, Distinguished Professor of Educational Psychology, University of California, Graduate School of Education, Riverside, CA, 92521. Dr. Swanson's research focuses on cognitive processes in children with learning disabilities.

Robert M. Gagne Professor of Psychology and Education and Director, Florida Center for Reading Research, Florida State University, 227 North Bronough Street, Suite 7250, Tallahassee, FL 32301. Dr. Torgesen's research interests include instructional methods for the prevention and remediation of reading disabilities and assessment practices for the early identification of children at risk for reading difficulties.

## **Users Review**

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#### **Barbara Barnes:**

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**Carol Stripling:**

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