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# The Highest Common Factor



Term 2 - 2026

## From the desk of... well, not quite the CEO



Dear friends,

The more observant among you may have noticed that this term's HCF sign-off looks a little different. Allan is taking some well-deserved leave, and I've been handed the keys - briefly - for this edition. I'm Denise Halliday, AAMT's Education Specialist.

If Term 2 feels busy, that's because it is. You don't need me to tell you that - the calendar fills quickly with assessments and parent meetings, and the pace picks up almost immediately. So before anything else, let me say from AAMT, thank you. The work you do in classrooms, staffrooms and offices across this country matters, and it matters every single day.

It's a busy time for us at AAMT too. Later this term we'll be holding our Annual Meeting - the first meeting of the newly constituted AAMT Ltd. If you're a member of one of AAMT's affiliate associations, watch out for an email from them in the coming week containing your personal invitation to attend. We're also in the final stages of preparation for our Singapore Study Tour in July - and the excitement is building, as we'll be taking a group of 25 educators to visit an array of schools and working with an incredible range of host partners. We can't wait to share what we learn.

There is much to explore in this edition. If you teach in the early years or primary school, the MERGA Teacher Read is a gem - it turns out that young children are surprisingly good at sharing things like sweets and donuts, and researchers have found they bring this intuitive thinking to division well before it's formally taught. Worth a read.

We're also shining a light on the National Mathematics Talent Quest, a wonderful opportunity to give your students an enriching mathematical challenge and the chance of some well-earned recognition.

And speaking of things worth exploring - if Maths300 isn't already part of your teaching toolkit, May is a great time to take a closer look. We're offering everyone who starts a new or returning subscription this month the chance to win a \$100 AAMT Bookstore voucher. Our friendly team can arrange a free trial - details are below. The winner will be drawn on 1 June 2026, so be sure to sign up before end of May.

Finally, as we move toward the end of term, two significant weeks deserve our attention: National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. You'll find a short piece in this edition about why honouring these weeks matters not just for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but for all Australians and we'll be sharing resources and commentary on our social media channels as both weeks draw near.

There is, as always, much to digest. I hope you find something in these pages that is useful, thought-provoking, or simply a reminder that the work you're doing is part of something much larger.

Warm regards,

Denise Halliday Education Specialist (*standing in for CEO Allan Dougan*)

AAMT Ltd

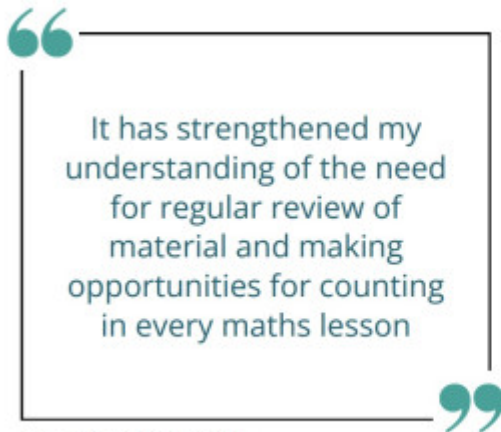


## Focus on Maths 2025 Impact Report now available

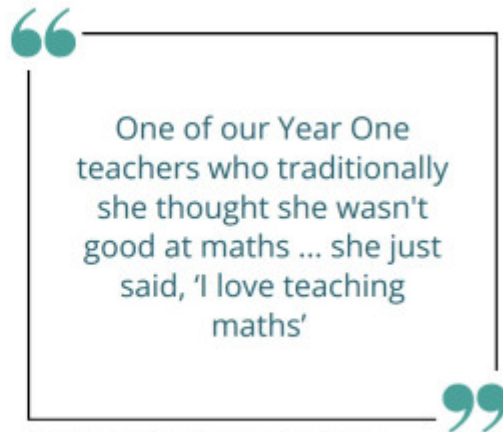
We're pleased to share that our 2025 Focus on Maths Impact Report has been published and is available on our website.

Focus on Maths provides targeted grants to disadvantaged schools - those in low-socioeconomic, rural or remote areas, supporting First Nations learners, and schools with out-of-field mathematics teachers. The grants fund locally-tailored professional learning, with the goal of building teacher confidence and capability in mathematics teaching, in a way that flows directly through to students.

The 2025 numbers tell a compelling story. Across the year, \$160,000 in grants supported 30 schools and 199 teachers - directly reaching over 4,800 students. And the impact is measurable: teacher-reported outcomes improved across every domain, with the sharpest gain in the clarity and effectiveness of classroom instruction (+0.91 on a 5-point scale).



Teacher, School 2



Assistant Principal, School 6

The program currently has 17 projects underway and is not accepting new applications while these are active. However, we are working closely with new philanthropic partners to help us extend our reach and continue our mission to support our most disadvantaged schools. Follow our Facebook page to be first to know when our application portal re-opens.

[Click here to read the full report](#)

### MERGA - Teacher Reads

Teacher Reads are one-page extracts of research findings from MERGA conference papers.



The purpose of Teacher Reads is to disseminate aspects of research that are meaningful to teachers, such as mathematical tasks, assessment tools, strategies for teaching, considerations for student learning, findings of research that may impact classroom practice, etc.

We hope teachers will draw inspiration from these Reads and follow up with details from the conference papers for research-informed classroom practice.

### Partitive Division: The Numbers Matter to Young Children

by Jill Cheeseman, Ann Downton and Kerryn Driscoll  
shared at MERGA47 in 2025

#### Can young children really do division before they're taught it?

Recent Australian research suggests they can - and often in surprisingly sophisticated ways. This Teacher Read explores how 5–6-year-olds solved division problems well before formal instruction.

Using familiar contexts such as sharing sweets, donuts and cards, the researchers found children confidently used strategies like sharing by groups, dealing by ones, and an intuitive approach called *estimate and adjust*. The study highlights how strongly children draw on number sense - and how important task design and number choice are when introducing division concepts.

This Teacher Read offers valuable ideas for early years and primary teachers, supporting rich conversations about remainders, informal strategies, and how young learners really think about division.

[Click here to read the extract](#)

Or, click [here](#) to read the full research paper.

## Maths300 - Rich Lessons, Real Mathematics

If you haven't yet explored Maths300, you're in for a treat. Our library of rich, high-quality mathematics lessons is designed to engage students in genuine mathematical thinking, the kind that sparks curiosity, builds persistence and makes maths genuinely enjoyable.



Not sure where to start? Head to [maths300.com](https://maths300.com) to get a sense of what's on offer, or browse back through our [Facebook page](#) where we've been sharing a series of Maths300 mini-lessons on Mondays throughout April.

**maths300 Mini Lesson Plan**

**DIVISION BOXES** Yrs: 5-6, 7-8

**CURRICULUM CONTENT**

- Number - factors, multiples, divisibility tests, place value
- Data organisers - tree diagrams

**ACTIVITY**

- Some practice activities introduce the task, creating 2,3,4 digit numbers divisible by 2 and then by 3, 4 and 5
- Students are asked to identify all the 3 digit numbers where the first digit is divisible by 1, the first 2-digit number is divisible by 2, and the whole 3-digit number is divisible by 3, without any repeated digits
- Technology is useful to help students test solutions
- After students begin listing solutions, a tree diagram is used to identify the total number of possible solutions

**PEDAGOGIES**

- Investigation
- Problem solving
- Technology

**EXTENSION**

Extend the problem to 4-digit, 5-digit ... 10-digit numbers and divisibility tests. Use technology (eg Maths300 software or spreadsheets) to test solutions

3, 6, 9, 12, 15...

These mini-lessons give a flavour of the resources, but the full lessons go much deeper, with detailed teacher notes, student activities and extension opportunities, designed to be explored and adapted by teachers.

Maths300 lessons sit comfortably within a balanced pedagogical approach - whether used to introduce and engage students with a concept, or at the consolidation stage where the goal is to transfer and extend mathematical thinking into new contexts. As AAMT's *Pedagogy in Mathematics* position paper argues, an effective teaching toolkit draws on a range of approaches, and Maths300 is a valuable part of that repertoire.

Write to us at [maths300@aamt.edu.au](mailto:maths300@aamt.edu.au) to arrange a free trial so you can experience the full lessons for yourself.

And for May, we have a little extra incentive: any new or returning subscriptions that begin this month will go into a draw to win a **\$100 voucher to spend in the AAMT Bookstore**. A great time to take the plunge - or to renew a lapsed subscription.

*A note for existing or previous users : some teachers have experienced difficulty accessing supporting resources - including worksheets, lesson notes and investigation guides - which were stored on Google Drive. These have now all been uploaded to Maths300 and should be readily accessible to everyone.*

## National Maths Summer Quest - State/Territory Entry Now Open

Every year, students across Australia choose a question that genuinely puzzles them and use mathematics to answer it. Why do teaspoons disappear? How do glasses work? How can you tell if a text was written by a human or an AI? The National Mathematics Talent Quest (NMTQ) gives students a genuine opportunity to think mathematically about questions that interest them - producing investigations that can earn recognition at state, territory and national level.

The path to the national stage begins locally, as the NMTQ is open exclusively to the strongest entries chosen by judges in the state and territory competitions run by AAMT's affiliate associations. They work closely with their communities and their teachers, and we're proud to celebrate the vital role they play. Local competitions are open now in most states and territories.

We particularly encourage teachers in the early primary and upper secondary years to get involved as these levels are underrepresented nationally, giving your students a real opportunity to shine.

Contact your state or territory mathematics association directly, or visit the [NMTQ page](#) on the AAMT website for a direct link to the relevant page for your local affiliate

It starts with a question. It could end with a national prize.

## From the Bookstore

### Revisiting the Favourite Lessons



#### Engaging Maths: 25 Favourite Lessons

by Doug Clarke, Anne Roche

This full-colour volume aims to enrich the mathematical experiences of primary school students (and their teachers) through enjoyable, challenging and active lessons.

Why not explore grid coordinates and compass directions through a piratical 'Treasure Island' map, or introduce simulation through a 'Throwing the globe' activity, or play a few rounds of 'Colour in decimats'?

Each lesson follows a similar pattern, beginning with an engaging 'hook'. There are clear instructions, interesting professional musings (including highlighting common misconceptions) and ideas for pulling the lesson together at the end.

The lessons are complete, with reproducible activity sheets and further professional references.

Reflections from the authors highlight some of the key pedagogical aspects and assessment potential.

Engaging maths, indeed!

[Click here to order](#)



#### Engaging Maths: 21 More Favourite Lessons

by Doug Clarke, Anne Roche, Matt Sexton

This book follows the success of Engaging Maths: 25 Favourite Lessons ("the Blue Book") which continues to stimulate a lot of interest from teachers, mathematics leaders, and pre-service teachers alike. There are 21 brand new lessons, across Foundation to Year 8.

This full colour volume with over 160 classroom photos encourages both physical and cognitive engagement, with lots of fun thrown in! Teachers can use Concept Cartoons to develop geometry understanding, enhance visualisation through Look Make Check Adjust, build mental computation through 4Up!, provide real challenge with Cubes in My Pocket, or head outside for Footy Angles.

With Matt Sexton joining the writing team, new features include an extended introduction with topics such as rethinking ability (achievement) grouping, using enabling and extending prompts, valuing productive struggle, and the importance of recording.

More engaging maths? Yes please!

[Click here to order](#)

## Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week - marking what matters

Two significant events fall in the coming weeks, and both deserve our attention.

National Reconciliation Week (27 May – 3 June) invites all Australians to reflect on and actively contribute to the journey toward reconciliation. This year's theme, *All In*, is a call for wholehearted, everyday commitment - not as a one-off gesture, but as sustained action. NAIDOC Week (6–13 July), which falls during the school holidays in most jurisdictions, celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The 2026 theme - *Fifty Years of Deadly* - marks an important milestone while reminding us that celebration and ongoing work go hand in hand.

At AAMT, these weeks help shape how we think about our role and responsibilities as a national organisation. Our [joint Commitment Statement](#) sets out our obligations clearly. That commitment is reflected in our ongoing work with affiliates, in the Focus on Maths program which actively prioritises schools serving First Nations communities, and in Allan's work as a board member of ATSIMA.

As both weeks draw near, keep an eye on our social media channels where we'll be sharing resources and commentary to support culturally responsive teaching - not just for these weeks, but all year round.

## Tax and Super competition now open!



It's time for Years 7–12 students to unleash their brilliance.

The **Tax, Super + You competition** is back, encouraging students to use their imagination and demonstrate what they know about tax and super.

They can write it, make it, or film it – whatever inspires them!

### What's in it for your students?

Besides building their tax and super financial literacy, students have the chance to win a **share of \$12,000 in prizes** for themselves *and* their school. Yes, you read that right - \$12,000!

**Entries close 5.00pm AEST on 4 September 2026.**

Check out the [competition teacher's information](#) page for everything you need - from tips to **free** classroom resources that help you easily integrate Tax, Super + You materials into your teaching. It saves time, adds fun, and supports your students along the way.

For any questions contact [taxsuperandyoucompetition@ato.gov.au](mailto:taxsuperandyoucompetition@ato.gov.au).

## Schools Plus Teaching Awards - applications close 8 May

Do you know a teacher who is changing lives? The Schools Plus Teaching Awards recognise exactly that - educators who are making a profound and lasting difference for their students.

Each year, twelve teachers and school leaders across Australia receive a Teaching Fellowship valued at \$20,000, gaining access to a 12-month professional development program and joining an exceptional alumni network of high-performing educators. Awards are presented at Parliament House, Canberra - national recognition at the highest level.

The awards are open to registered teachers and school leaders across government, Catholic and independent primary and secondary schools. Teachers in disadvantaged communities are particularly encouraged to apply.

If you've been thinking about putting your hand up - or nominating a deserving colleague - now is the time. Applications close on **Friday 8 May 2026**, and with the deadline approaching, don't leave it too late. We know that there is incredible work happening in maths classrooms around the country and we'd love to see it recognised through a national award.

Find out more and apply at [schoolsplus.org.au/teachingawards](https://schoolsplus.org.au/teachingawards).

Thank you for subscribing to the AAMT newsletter.

Here are a few other ways to stay updated on the latest in maths education in Australia:

Follow us on **Facebook** or on Twitter **@aamtinc**.

Connect with **AAMT Ltd**, our **CEO Allan Dougan** or **Education Specialist Denise Halliday** on LinkedIn.

Our quarterly newsletter is delivered right into your mailbox. Past newsletters can be found on our website under the **About Us/Newsletters** section.

And if you like what you read, please tell your colleagues about us!

Kind regards,  
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