

How Can the Teacher Teach More than One Grade at a Time?

Teachers use many different strategies to teach students in combined grades. They may:

- Introduce a common topic then give each grade a different task or problem.
- Break students into groups to study different problems and report back to the class. These groups can be flexible, including students with varied interests and skills.
- Bring students together for activities like health, physical education, and the arts.



How Can I Help My Child Succeed?

1. Get involved in your child's school life. Ask about their day-school work, friends, and their teacher.
2. Stay connected with the school. Talk to your child's teacher. Ask questions.
3. Make Learning fun. Learning is not limited to the classroom. Simple activities can build your child's skills and confidence. Make reading fun for younger ones by pointing out the words all around you.



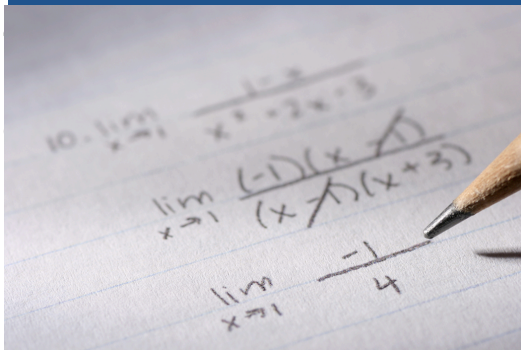
An Introduction To

Combined Grades

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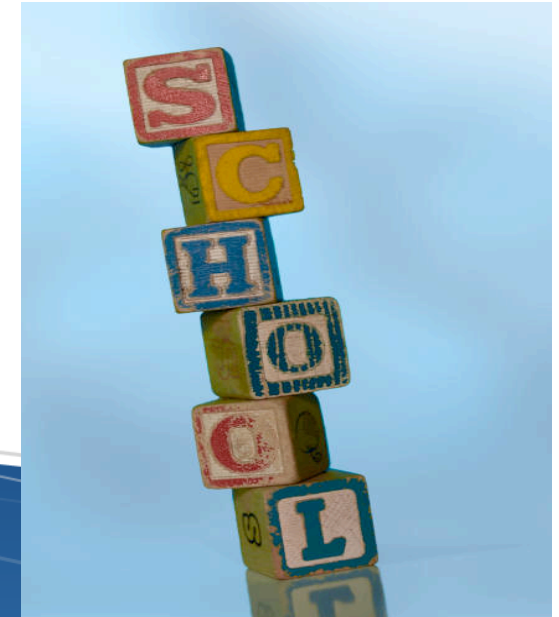
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WHAT IS A COMBINED CLASSROOM?

Combined classes group children from two or more consecutive grades in one classroom. Schools combine classes for a variety of reasons. This includes organizing classes to meet student learning needs and combining grades to balance class size.

All classrooms include students with a range of skills and abilities. Combined classes are neither better nor worse than single-grade classes. They are simply one of many ways schools meet student's academic and social development needs.



How Will A Combined Class Affect My Child?

WILL MY CHILD GET ENOUGH INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION?

Every day, both single-grade classes and combined grades, teachers work with large groups, small groups, and individual students. But students in combined classrooms also benefit from a broader support structure.

Younger children can ask students from the higher grade for help. Older students learn by explaining problems to their younger peers. In fact, peer tutoring can help higher achieving and older students reinforce their knowledge and positive social behaviors.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Several studies have found that students in combined classes do just as well as students in single-grade classes. In fact, some students actually do better in language and reading.

Since teachers are usually required to teach the same class for two years, they become more familiar with the student and their families. This results in a strong sense of continuity. Research also shows that on the first day of school, both students and teachers felt more relaxed and calm than the students in single-age classrooms.

Research done with a Kentucky Public School multi-grade classroom shows that over time students' academic achievement and teacher's preparation time increased.

IMPROVED SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Studies show that children in combined classes have **more opportunities for emotional and social growth**. The rich social environment helps students:

- Learn how to work on their own and as part of a team
- Build leadership abilities as they work together and help each other
- Develop decision-making skills, and become more self-motivated and responsible
- Learn in an environment that reflects the real world. The diverse ideas and opinions of classmates help expand students' perspectives.