

AAM: What's his name?

Lady: Willy Winrod(?) He's in Ithica.

AAM: He published these books then? He writes these which are published?

Lady: I'm not exactly certain. I think there has not been a change. What he publishes is a set of manuals for teachers and a set of worksheets for children. One of the things he has said has certainly been true for my children that children don't want colorful math books full of pictures and cartoons and little kid stuff. They want work. His math sheets are perfectly plain sheets of paper with equations on them and one plan of directions at the top. He found that the children thought they were doing something quite grown-up and very serious and that this was a very positive reinforcement for what they were learning. I find this to be true with my little fellows.

AAM: Sort of like a cross-word puzzle in a way--the pleasure of working it out.

Lady: I think so. My children have always liked to do real work and not liked to do make-work. In fact, early in parenting it bothered me because I knew the children should learn to make their beds, keep their rooms, pick up their toys, and do something to help around the house. I always felt if they asked me why the best answer I could give them was because it's good for you. Because I knew perfectly well I could have done it myself. They knew that too. This is one of the advantages I find in home teaching. I cannot do it all. I cannot keep house and get all the meals and teach school too. So now the things they do at home are necessities for all of us. They appreciate that, and it's much more meaningful.

AAM: Isn't that good!

Lady: That's great. Anyway the natural number system is built on ten mathematical axioms. The children are told that. At least the teacher is. But each of the games has as one of its rules one of those ten axioms.

AAM: What are the axioms?

Lady: I couldn't remember them? Well the first one is the numerical figures from zero to nine. Counting is the process of matching those symbols and names on a one to one basis, with whatever you are counting.

AAM: Oh I see, principles of that.

Lady: Yes. The rest of them are all the basic things involved in addition, subtraction, multiplication, division. All four of which can easily be taught in the first grade. Just amazing! It usually takes 4 years to get that far with the children in the public schools.

AAM: But this isn't used in the public schools?

Lady: In some. Some of the schools in Ithica use it. The school that my mother teaches in used it for a while(?) and got rid of it. Different parents didn't like it. The children learn to play. The first game we learned was dominos same number. We had a set of cardboard dominos with spots. They are not arranged in a pattern like conventional dominos. They are all different. So the child never can associate them with patterns.