

from the November 2002 issue of NCTM's Teaching Children Mathematics...

Daily Tantalizers Math, Thomas O'Brien, Grades 1–5, **Daily Tantalizers Math Resource Manuals**, \$23.95 ea. Each resource manual contains 180 critical thinking activities with blackline masters. **Daily Tantalizers Math Student Journals**, \$119.95 set of 30, **Daily Tantalizers Classpack**, \$139.95 set. The set includes a resource manual and 30 student journals. ETA/Cuisenaire, 500 Greenview Court, Vernon Hills, IL 60061.

Daily Tantalizers, says author Thomas O'Brien, is concerned with "children making sense of mathematics." Activities are designed not to accentuate the "drill and kill" of number but to investigate its important ideas. Essential concepts related to number, such as classification, order, and inference, are stressed. At each grade level, the product offers 180 activities, one for each day of the school year. Students' activity journals are printed on card stock and are spiral-bound. A teacher's resource manual shows each activity in the students' journals, along with the answer, comments, and extensions. In the event that more than one answer is acceptable, the manual offers a sample answer. Comments and extensions are sometimes accompanied by suggestions for manipulative adaptations or writing opportunities. All activities are correlated to the NCTM 2000 Process Standards of Problem Solving, Reasoning and Proof, Communication, Connections, and Representation. Many questions are open-ended so that they are accessible to children of many skill levels.

I offered teachers in grades one through five the opportunity to try *Daily Tantalizers* with their students. Without exception, teachers found the materials suitable for warm-ups, "sponge" activities, center ideas, and a variety of other uses. I would highly recommend adding *Daily Tantalizers* to any teacher's toolkit of instructional, maintenance, or assessment materials.—*Robyn Silbey, Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, MD 20850.*

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Off The Path Math with Tobbs! Vol.1. Tom O'Brien, 2003.60pp., \$14.50 paper. FableVision, 44 Pleasant Street, Watertown MA 02472. (888) 240-3734, www.fablevision.com/shoppe.

Off the Path Math with Tobbs! is a set of fifty "creative everyday thinking activities" designed for use with children ages three to five. The activities are easily understandable and useful to parents, caregivers and teachers. The booklet is designed like a calendar with one activity per page and plenty of blank space for note taking. The format of the activities is the same throughout the booklet. Each page consists of a suggested age range, basic instructions, a list of required materials, and options for varying the activity. Each activity includes a "What's it all about?" section that identifies the mathematical concepts the activity addresses and explains why they are important for children to learn. Many of the activities include everyday activities such as coins, blocks, macaroni, or other food items to offer hands-on learning opportunities that foster thinking. The use of

questioning strategies in all the activities encourages reasoning, communication and creative thought.

Although the activities are simple in execution, they are rich in opportunities for adults to interact with young children in meaningful ways that set the stage for critical thinking skills. This set of activities could be very useful to parents and teachers who seek to prepare children to understand and explain their thinking and strategies in dealing with new ideas. —*Wayne Gable, Austin Independent School District, Austin ,TX 78703*