Martina: Okay. So we’ve given you a copy of the questions. So if you want to ever reread one because if you’re like me, I prefer to read than to hear. So the first thing we’re starting with is asking you about next year we’re starting a hub school with another set of teachers coming on board and wondering about specific advice that you would give to new teachers joining Math Minds.

A-Gr3: I think some specific advice I would give would be definitely go with an open mind with it, to plan really well at the start of the year and in terms of long range plans and getting a feel for it, realizing that the first book does take substantially longer than the second book will take.

So realizing that when you’re planning and also realizing that some of the steps in the book that may seem common sense or unnecessary are actually very useful for the kids and so it is really important to use all of them and also just the bonus questions. Giving students bonus questions is hard thought. But, I think about how great it is for the kids who get concepts really quickly, that they have something to be challenged with, that they still find it exciting and that they’re still learning along the way as well. Does that kind of answer?

Martina: Yeah.

A-Gr3: Yeah?

Martina: Yeah, for sure. Those are – those are things that stood out for you as things that you kind of figured out as the year went on.

A-Gr3: Absolutely. When I did my long range plans, I had anticipated the first book would be half the year – or second book would be the other half of the year. And you know what. It’s not that way at all. It very much is we are – we should finish up the first book end of next week and we still have then just over two months to get through the other stuff by going through it. There’s so much that is review from what we’ve done that hopefully it should go much faster with it.

The kids also in the first year – and I’m assuming it’ll be a little bit different next year, but it takes – it took them a while this year to get into the system. It was brand new for me. It was brand new for them. I learned that you should adapt the content of the book. And getting used to working from – or having a book to go and do their questions then and getting used to kind of how the format of the lesson works and just kind of – like I said, at the beginning of the year, it was getting our feet wet trying to explore a little bit and now it seems to be going much smoother, much faster and the kids are – they’re getting it. Like they’re doing really well.

Martina: Good.

A-Gr3: Yeah. Yeah.

Martina: Nice. So the second part of that question, why do you see this advice as being useful or important to teacher – for teachers new to Math Minds? We’ve kind of covered that but would you –

A-Gr3: I think I kind of covered it. Yeah. Like I said, in terms of planning, it’s good to know that. I also feel that probably the first year is going to be the toughest year in many regards with it just because – like I said, the kids are getting used to it. I’m getting used to it whereas next year I’ll have kids who are already familiar with the program and they kind of know the steps that are involved with it. They know about these bonus questions. They know all of that.

And I’m better prepared as well in terms of what makes a good bonus question. What are some of those things you can do. Because it makes the day go a lot smoother. I said at the start of the year it was a lot of little speed bumps along the way and blocks that I was getting over for myself as well and like I said, the more I got into it, the easier it became and like I said, the kids are doing – they’re doing really well.

Martina: Good.

A-Gr3: Yeah. Yeah.

Martina: Okay. One B. What advice would you give the research team going forward in the project as we work with new teachers here as well as the new teachers in the hub school?

A-Gr3: I think for myself, probably my biggest concerns were probably already addressed back in the fall and that was more of feeling very overwhelmed with people in the room that I wasn’t familiar with and being recorded right away as I felt – it was my first year teaching Grade 3. It was my first year with JUMP Math and it was all being videotaped. I felt a little bit – a little bit overwhelmed with it and so one of the things I did is I spoke to my researcher and just said rather than every day not being sure whether or not you’re going to come in or not, can we do it once a week. Also, I think that you need to talk about the importance of adapting content of JUMP Math.

And then all of a sudden, as soon as those parameters were set, I felt the stress lift off of my shoulders. I felt more natural with my kids because that way I felt that I could go through the lessons and I knew for myself did it work, did it not work and I could kind of play with it but I wasn’t so aware that it was being watched, if that makes sense. And so, like I said, as soon as those parameters were set, it became so much more comfortable and so one of the things I would suggest for researchers generally with this project is that at the start of the year, or periodically, just meet – meet with the teachers and just discuss kind of what are the expectations, what are you looking for, what are the parameters that both people are comfortable as well. So wanting to make sure that we’re meeting the goals of the project but also that it’s – that every – both sides are comfortable basically, right? And yeah.

So like I said, just kind of those regular interactions of checking in and seeing how it’s going and, yeah, and same note too, because like for the demonstrations where we’ve talked it, the message has been – like no one will surprise you by showing up in the classroom. I felt surprised a lot and so that would be one of the things is now I know. It’s either Thursday or Friday. It’s not a surprise and I would feel for everybody having those dates in mind so it’s – it is something that you’re aware of is happening and – yeah.

Martina: Okay. Sounds good. C. One of the specific goals is to support the development of a strong Math Minds community both within the individual schools and between the schools. Do you have any suggestions or advice about how to facilitate that?

A-Gr3: Between the two? I would say when there’s PD sessions, absolutely having the possibility of meeting with teachers from the other school. I think especially for a new school starting up, it would be great if end of the year PD or PD in August, that we have a chance to actually sit down and talk with them too because for any concerns that they have, it’s nice to talk to another teacher who’s kind of been through it and also to maintain that contact throughout the year to say, look. This is what I’m doing. Do you have any suggestions? What are some extra steps I can put in here or what are some bonus questions we can throw in here or whatever it happens to be that you can just, even though bonus questions are hard to make – you regularly have a contact that you can email back and forth so it doesn’t just have to be PD sessions but that you can just regularly contact and – yeah.

And I think too, part of it as well is discussing kind of the Math that’s present in the school beyond just the Math class. So like the Math Club that we have going, trying to encourage them to do something like that as well gets the kids excited about it beyond just the typical Math classes.

Martina: Okay. Thank you. So Two A. JUMP materials such as teachers’ guides, Smartboard lessons and workbooks are all intended to help with planning and implementing Math instruction. Have you found these materials to be helpful?

A-Gr3: Hugely helpful. I think it’s absolutely – you can see the steps that are in place, having the Smartboard lessons and see the progression of the lessons is a huge benefit. Realizing that you can access, like the unit tests that they have, you can – you’ve got the copies in your binder but you also can go online and modify them. Like you can download them to your computer and modify them. Make it so that you can extra practice with them. There’s lots of stuff that you can do with those resources. The – yeah. Like I said, it’s – those have gone really well.

One thing that I found is the Grade 3 level, in particular, the workbook is – it’s quite a huge jump visually from the Grade 2. And so that, for some of the kids, I know have been a bit overwhelmed with the sheer quantity that they see on a page. So trying to really break it down.

Again, over the year that has become – they’ve become much more accustomed to the way it looks and what’s expected and all of that. But again, just kind of the presentation has been something to work through and the other thing too, that’s – and back to kind of the advice I would give as well. Always previewing those – the Smartboard lessons.

Again, going back to adapting the content of the book and the slides, just because there will often be topics where there’s 42 slides. There’s no way you’re going to do 42 slides and you know what? You might only need three slides to get through the topic, right. Like so kind of picking and choosing and also just being aware of just how stuff lines up. So if there’s a graph, there might – the scale on the graph or on the number line might not actually line up exactly the way it needs to.

So again, just kind of going through and fine tuning and moving that scale just slightly over a couple of inches just to make sure it actually lines up and you can see that. So again, it’s – even though the materials are there, there’s still tons of prep work on the part of the teacher as well. But it’s great. Like I said, the materials are great.

Martina: Okay.

A-Gr3: Did that – I kind of went way off topic. Does that –

Martina: No, that –

A-Gr3: Okay.

Martina: You were on topic. Were there ways that you found materials restrictive or difficult?

A-Gr3: Like I said, in terms of – you know what? I like the idea of being able to take sometimes materials from a few other spots as well. So like even just in terms of skip counting. If there’s a song that you can bring in to help kids memorize that skip counting, stuff like that. You want to be able to still – still use. But in terms of being restrictive, I feel that covered quite substantially.

That being said, the extensions that I often use in my classroom, I have to go about the Smartboard – or word of that is wrong, but – that – you need to find bonus questions often from a variety of other sources beyond the JUMP resource in order to find the proper challenge for each individual child. But making bonus questions is hard work.

Martina: Okay.

A-Gr3: Yeah.

Martina: Okay. So you’ve partially answered Two B already. I’ll say it and then if you want to add anything then you can. To what extent did you follow the teachers’ guide, Smartboard lessons or workbook?

A-Gr3: I have followed quite carefully Smartboard lessons. Like I said, I will go through – I certainly will not use all of the slides. Same thing too, with their lessons in the teacher guide as well. I go through it and I pick and choose the stats that are needed for it. Yeah, in terms of where did I improvise or extend or elaborate, the part for sure that needed extra steps was subtraction by – with regrouping. Those lessons in particular, the kids seemed to need quite a bit more. So even though it was broken down in microsteps, it was – that was one topic that needed quite a bit of extra preps.

Martina: Okay.

A-Gr3: An extra curio, an extra –

Martina: And so you brought in your own step or did you look back to Grade 2 or was there too much of a jump between there.

A-Gr3: Oh, I looked into Grade 2 as well. I looked at just other materials as well. I used some of the Black by Masters that were part of that particular lesson, going through. We did a lot of stuff with manipulatives. We made a chart in terms of here’s your picture of it. Here’s your picture with it being broken down and separated, like the ten blocks being separated. Here’s your column with the actual equation. Trying to get all of those steps in place but that definitely is the concept that my head still sticks out as – where it was a few lessons in the Smart – or in the JUMP resource. Then I think we spent almost two weeks trying to go through all of the steps for it

Martina: Okay. And with the workbook, are you kids doing most of the working through the workbooks?

A-Gr3: They’re doing the majority of it, yeah. Definitely we will adapt based on child as well. So the thing is if the kids really get it, they don’t necessarily have to do all of the questions. Some of them too, what I’m doing is I’m pulling some materials from the Grade 2 just as extra practice for them, kind of going back and making sure that those steps are there.

But also it was very helpful to go back to the Grade 2 as well for the kids that need more of that visual – lessons would be overwhelming. There’s a lot of – a lot of writing on a page and at the Grade 2 it’s – there’s much more white space on the page and that seems to work well for some of them as well.

Martina: And then when they – do they complete the Grade 2 and then move into the Grade 3 or do they –

A-Gr3: I’m picking and choosing. I’m picking and choosing lessons. So if a child’s doing really well with some of the Grade 3, then he’s continuing with it. If he gets to the top, that’s a bit tricky. I might go and pull some of the material from the Grade 2.

Martina: Okay.

A-Gr3: And oftentimes the concepts are identical. Sometimes even the wording is the same and it just is – it’s just a presentation where it becomes a little bit easier to see. It’s one or two questions on a page versus 20.

Martina: Okay. Makes sense. So C. JUMP emphasizes teaching with microsteps, frequent assessment and feedback, the use of bonus questions and attention to mental math. Have you found these ideas helpful?

A-Gr3: Yeah. Absolutely. Like I said, the stuff – the microsteps to me have been huge in terms of what I see as common sense and of course they know how to do this. They don’t necessarily – some do, but not all and so breaking it down for those is really great and even for the kids who do get it. Sometimes realizing that there are steps. It’s not just the way it is because I know it is.

Actually being able to separate those has been really good. I think it’s strengthened the kids who are already have the material well under control and it also for the kids who need that extra steps, it’s really – it’s really good.

And sometimes too, you’ll find that you even need to microstep some of those microsteps just to make sure that all those gaps are being filled in. And I think it’s because of those microsteps as well that the level of success is so high because – because they’re getting those gaps filled in and I think it’s especially important for that to happen because all of the concepts seem to repeat themselves all the way through.

So we start the year with skip counting and there’s little bits of skip counting all the way through. And assuming you’ve done some addition and subtraction, then you’re going to start seeing subtraction throughout and it’s you’re getting a review all the way through and if you’ve missed something in September, if you missed something in Grade 2 or Grade 1, you need to fill those in so that you don’t get further behind.

Martina: Okay.

A-Gr3: Yeah. In terms of block assessment and feedback, I think it’s so good. The – something that I’m doing as well is the Whiteboards where you ask a question, get them – get everyone in the class to write it down. It’s a really quick check for me and it’s really good for the kids because all of them then have to – to write something and you can really – yeah, and so if they’re all writing something, nobody’s sitting back saying, oh yeah, I get it. It’s – you actually have – like you know who’s got it, who needs the extra help and then you can make sure you target them when you’re going around helping them.

Martina: Right.

A-Gr3: Yeah. Absolutely.

Martina: Good. And you’ve talked a bit about bonus questions.

A-Gr3: Yeah, and just the bonus questions. It’s really great having – again, that’s something struggled with back in the fall as well, is trying to come up with bonus questions that were challenging enough but that also were grade level appropriate, were trying to meet all those requirements and I find that if I get some really great bonus questions in there, the kids are so excited to complete their work in order to do their bonus questions and again, it just really solidifies their understanding of it and it allows time as well, then, to make sure that everyone is understanding the material and that we’re okay to keep moving on.

Martina: And mental math. Do you do anything particular there?

A-Gr3: We do. Yeah, like with skip counting, we definitely have and then that becomes with addition and subtraction, we’re using a lot of finger and hand games that they teach in the – the general math as well. And again, it’s been really good in terms of solidifying the kids’ ability to do those things.

I was totally blown away in September when we started some of that and how quickly they could get their multiplications up to five times five which is what they need to do in Grade 3 and the vast majority had it before the end of September which was awesome. So – and again, if you’ve got that, you can apply those concepts and keep going to higher numbers as well and, yeah.

Martina: Okay. In what – do you want – can you comment at all on the ways that you improvised or extended, elaborate. You mentioned you brought in some of your own things for bonus.

A-Gr3: Well, I brought in – like for instance, I brought in a couple of songs with the skip counting just to help them - especially with the threes – to make sure they’ve got those. And sorry, can you repeat the question again?

Martina: Just in any ways that you would have improvised or extended or elaborated on what’s in the JUMP, whether that be bonus or – you already talked about having to make smaller microsteps so that would be one example. You said you brought – you like to bring in your own bonus. Is there any – are there other ways that you improvised or would you like to elaborate on any of those?

A-Gr3: Got to give me a second here. So something that I will often do as well, just in terms of even just instruction with improvising as well is if we’re doing a concept on the Smartboard lesson. If there’s an example where we can have kids up to the front and actually using them as examples, that’s great as well.

So, for instance, we – when we were doing Venn diagrams and before we got into the actual middle category where it applies to both, actually being able to separate some things, we would get all the kids up to the front and we would get some kids on the left side of the room, some kids on the right side of the room and choose different ways that we could categorize them.

And again, some of those just – like hands-on. They can see it. Really emphasized it for them and then I think the one time it was – had to do with t-shirts. And one – and t-shirts versus sweaters. Well one girl was wearing a t-shirt under her sweater so then all of a sudden that was the perfect example of now you’ve got somebody who would fit in the – both category. So sometimes little things like that work well.

In terms of unit tests as well, I use – I’ll often bring in questions that I can incorporate students’ names into it. Again, we’re also it’s somebody sees their name, they’re quite excited.

Martina: Yeah.

A-Gr3: In terms of the bonus questions, material is being pulled from all over the place. It’ll be from different Math competitions, being able to pull some of the questions out from those. Sometimes it will be the extensions from the JUMP material. Sometimes it will be taking a question that is in the JUMP Math and rephrasing it. So all of a sudden it looks different but now – now how does it work?

Yeah, like it’s – and especially with the – especially with the bonus and stuff, it’s coming from everywhere but in terms of the actual smart lessons, I – because I’ve been sticking to them quite a lot, but like I will adapt based on kind of the needs as well and also just in terms of how the kids are doing as well and the feedback they need to get. We’re going to spend more time on this, less time on this. So what I may have planned, we may skip through a whole lot of it because they’ve got it, or you know what? We need a lot more skipping.

Martina: Okay. Okay. Thank you. That’s –

A-Gr3: I don’t know if that kind of got what –

Martina: Yeah, no, that’s excellent. I’m sorry.

A-Gr3: Okay. No worry.

Martina: I realize I just jumped back and forth a bit her on you, so sorry about that.

A-Gr3: No worry.

Martina: Were there – was there anything that you found particularly restrictive or difficult? Back to – in terms of microstepping and feedback and bonus questions?

A-Gr3: Developing good bonus questions has been difficult. Like I said, I’m pulling materials from a lot of places. But especially at the beginning of the year, when you haven’t covered very much at that point, trying to come up with bonus questions that are going to challenge the kids and allow you time to work with the kids who need extra help. Coming up with really good ones has taken a lot of time, a lot of effort. But I feel now I’ve got a better idea of kind of what works for the kids as well and also just realizing not every kid’s going to have the same bonus question, right. Like you’re going to change the bonus question based on the kid and kind of the extra challenges that they need, so preparing that material.

And then – but like I said, in terms of actually developing ones that will – will work well for them, has been definitely a challenge. In terms of something that’s – sorry, it was restrictive or –

Martina: Difficult.

A-Gr3: Difficult. Difficult, again, would be some of the timing as well where, like I said, I was planning on that subtraction with regrouping to take a couple of lessons, two or three lessons. We needed to spend two weeks on it. So again, finding time in different places to do that. And just realizing there’s still – there is still lots to cover. I feel – actually over the March break is when I pulled everything together again just to make sure that we would have time to appropriately cover everything and it’s like, yup. I can breathe. We’re okay.

But some of that has been a challenge thinking there’s so much to do and there’s only so many minutes in the day to get it done. That I think has been a challenge.

Martina: Okay. That makes senses. Okay, so D is referring to the list of principles for prompting success – these are just in their short form listed here. Have you found any of these to be helpful, restrictive, difficult? You don’t have to talk to each one of them but pick out ones that stick out for you.

A-Gr3: The recursion by design I think is amazing. Like I said, where you’ve got the – you spend so much time working on skip counting and then you see it all the way through. Absolutely everywhere. Probability and data management. Well the scales they do on their graphs are not always by ones, right? Like you have to be able to have those – the pictographs. You have to be able to do that.

It comes back all the way through and what I really like is that by doing that, it really solidifies it every step of the way. So it’s not just, oh, yeah, we’ve seen this. We don’t need to worry about it now for the next year. You need to have it. So – and like I said, you really – it gets solidified, yeah, all the way through.

And especially for the kids too who are struggling a bit with it as well. If they don’t get it right away, they might get it a little bit further down the road as well. So it’s just – I find it really good and it makes sense, the order that everything’s taught in. Where at the beginning, I’m not too sure why this unit would have gone before this unit or why does this unit have to come after this unit? Why can’t it just start with this one? Realizing that progression has been really unique.

Martina: Oh, okay.

A-Gr3: Yeah. And then – prompting a participatory culture of inquiry too has been good as well in terms of kids are interested in what they’re doing and the participatory is huge, that everyone is participating in it. It’s not just your three kids whose hands are up all the time. Everyone’s doing something.

And especially then that inquiry as well where some – that’s where a lot of the bonus questions will come into play as well. And if they have an idea about what that bonus question is, like I said, sometimes they’re so excited about wanting to make sure they get it done so that they can – can work on it or ask me, can we finish our bonus question from yesterday or whatever it happens to be is nice because they’re excited to discover.

Martina: Great.

A-Gr3: And the discoveries are not told has been something that I’ve had to work on as well where I tend a talk a lot and so again, that’s something I’m continuing to work on as well is to – for me to talk less and more for them to discover and figure out as well.

And the extraneous distractors minimized. That was something I wondered about at the beginning as well with the – all the Smartboard lessons. Visually it’s the black and white. They all look very similar. And again, thinking I want to spice these up for these kids. And you know what though? It does. It makes sense that they are – they’re focused on the Math. It’s not so much about what does this button do or what’s this animation here or – it’s all about let’s look at the Math which is interesting because I’ve come around to that, where my opinion had been we’ve got to do something with this and I – and I see. I see the benefit of it. So yeah.

Martina: Okay.

A-Gr3: And yeah.

Martina: Okay. So we’re – you spoke a bit to E already but if you’d like to - have particular experiences – oh sorry.

[CROSSTALK]

Martina: -- just breaks in a different spot than mine. Have particular experiences stretched you outside your comfort zone?

A-Gr3: Absolutely. Like I’d spoken to earlier, being that it’s my first year in Grade 3, being that brand new to this resource, jumping in with it but then, like I said, kind of feeling watched a lot of it, has been definitely uncomfortable. Like I said, setting those parameters has made such a big difference for me. And also just feeling as well some element of control too. Like with the videos that are there. Now where we can choose which ones go on the hard drive, all of that.

That makes – that makes a huge difference for me as well because the reality is not every lesson is perfect and no lesson is perfect. I should say that. But some are definitely better than others or if the kids are having an off day or whatever it happens to be, it’s nice to be able to have some element of being able to say, yeah, that one we probably don’t want to – but being able to talk about it as well. Like I said, I have no issue talking about any of the lessons.

But definitely probably the biggest one has been being aware of – that people are watching and, like I said, for part of that as well is even though we’ve been told it’s not evaluative. It’s no one’s judging you, the whole bit. My experience too, has always been if somebody’s in your room, it’s to be evaluated because it’s – that’s what happens, right, is that’s how teachers get their contracts.

They’re evaluated, right, when people are in the room and people drop in but usually not with no pads and that type of thing. Yeah. So anyway, that’s been definitely a struggle for me but I feel, again, it’s gotten much better.

Martina: Okay. All right. So Math teachers learn something new about Mathematic whenever they teach it but they don’t always notice. Have you noticed something new about Mathematics this year? So your own understanding of Math. Has there been any insights in that area?

A-Gr3: I think one of the things that I hadn’t thought about before is how completely interrelated a lot of the things are. So like I said, that systematic recursion by design. Not thinking about setting up a scale and realizing that where you started needs to start at the zero and you keep going up from there and the kids will always start at one. And so just even things like that, things that for me, seem like, well, of course. Right.

And I think part of it for me has been I can see where a lot of the kids, their thinking is starting to come from and realizing okay, those are the things – those are the areas we need to make sure we address and that we need to make sure that those steps are given. But I think probably my biggest thing has been really breaking it down. Don’t taking – not taking anything for granted and really realizing that just how important all of those gaps are that they are filled all along the way. Yeah.

Martina: Okay. So Three B. There are times during the planning for teaching of a lesson when it becomes evident that there are gaps in our own understanding, mathematical understanding, that make it difficult to teach a particular concept or to respond to a student’s question. Have you noticed anything like that in your classes this year?

A-Gr3: I – I honestly don’t know if there’s been a Math question that I have been totally stumped on. I’m just trying to think. There’s been ones where I’ll have to go and I’ll have to think and I’ll have to process and really figure out what’s going on with it.

Martina: Yeah, I think that’s kind of what we’re looking for there. Can you speak to one of those, just where you’ve – not that you weren’t able to answer it but where you thought more deeply about it than you had before.

A-Gr3: I can’t come up with an example for you here. Okay. So one example would be in my head where it’s this is the logical order that things need to happen in and I’ll have one student who will often come up with the same answer but will have done it in a very different way.

And so sometimes I’ll have to stop and think. Okay. He’s got the right answer. But does his method make sense? And walking him through and so – and walking myself through with it as well and so there’s been instances where absolutely, his method does make sense, not necessarily the way I would do it but it works and there’s nothing wrong with it.

There’s other times where he’ll come up with the answer but the method doesn’t make sense with the question. So having to talk him through as well, that – well, you’ve got the answer right this time. If you would apply it to this next question with different numbers, you might not get that – the right answer the next time, right? So being able to talk through.

So again, you will definitely – there’s been situations where having to put my own self in their shoes and think of their method.

Martina: Yeah. So we’re on Four A. Can you think of a lesson prior to Math Minds that didn’t go as well as you hoped and then comment on that in terms of what you learned this year and how that might impact your approach to the method?

A-Gr3: So prior to this Math Minds project. So pre –

Martina: Yeah.

A-Gr3: Okay.

Martina: So from last year.

A-Gr3: Okay. So I’m trying to think of – I’ve taught Math a lot. I’m trying to think of a specific one I can pull from. Okay. So probably one of the things would have been either at the junior high or high school level for Math. Sometimes it would be that I would teach a lesson and it would be – I would have expected them to know certain background knowledge before starting the lesson.

And so I would work through the lesson, go through it with them and you’d have – lots would get it and it would be fine but then you would have some who wouldn’t and I would go back and I would re-explain kind of the steps and do all of that. Probably what I should have done is gone much further back and tried to figure out where exactly where those gaps missing and trying to figure out.

So whether it’s Grade 8 or 11 or 12 or whatever it happens to be, figuring out where is that – rather than focusing on the objective of the lesson. This is what we need to teach. Figuring out, you know what. Maybe we need to go back a few years even and figure out, okay. Let’s go through this. Let’s go through these steps. Now if we can do this. Now this is how this makes sense here. So yeah. Does that kind of –

Martina: Yeah, that makes sense.

A-Gr3: Did that make sense?

Martina: Yeah.

A-Gr3: Yeah. Okay.

Martina: Yup. As they teach, teachers often think about ways I might do this next year. Can you think of a lesson that you taught this year that you’re excited to try again next year?

A-Gr3: Honestly, I’m probably most excited to work the regrouping again next year.

Martina: The subtraction one that you talked about?

A-Gr3: Yeah. Absolutely. And I think part of it is because the addition went fairly – quite smoothly with them and it was obviously the subtraction was – well, there’s we’re borrowing. It’s all kinds of things. But part of me feels we spent so much time on it this year, now maybe I can be more efficient in how I teach it and approach it as well and figuring out okay, so you know what.

If addition went really well, is it because they just knew where the numbers went and they weren’t changing – some numbers weren’t getting lower and all kinds of things with all the borrowing. Reinforcing that addition and the steps involved in the addition and seeing how that works and applies to the subtraction. But I feel like because that was my biggest struggle this year with teaching Math, I’d like to go and do it again and see how it changes and see how the kids do with it.

Martina: Interesting.

A-Gr3: Yeah.

Martina: Four C. Where do you see your greatest strengths as an elementary teacher, Math or otherwise?

A-Gr3: I think I like to have fun with them. I think I can get into whatever project it is that we’re doing. I think I’m very patient with them and I like getting to know each and every one of them as well, right. Like they’re – every one of them is a person and kind of being able to – yeah, to get to know each and every one of them.

I feel that I am good at breaking down stuff into the smaller steps as well. Like I said, because it is my first year with this grade level, realizing kind of where their background knowledge is and kind of figuring that out for myself. But I feel that I can meet them at whatever – whatever level they’re at.

Martina: You’ve done – taught junior high before, is that right?

A-Gr3: Yeah. I – I was Grade 6 last year and it’s my second year in elementary. Other than that it was – I was in high school for four years before that and a junior/senior high for a year prior to that as well.

Martina: And that was all Math?

A-Gr3: Math, yeah.

Martina: Okay.

A-Gr3: Yeah, and no, I shouldn’t say all Math. I did resource as well with working with kid with learning disabilities for a chunk of time in there as well.

Martina: Yeah, okay. And how is what you’re doing in Math class similar to or different from what you are doing in other subjects?

A-Gr3: The subjects I teach this year are LA and Art. And as it was alluded to in – or talked about in our session this morning as well with Art, really realizing you have to break down – break down those steps because otherwise it can lead to chaos with whatever it happens to be and, yeah, so just realizing your instructions have to be very very clear.

With LA as well, again, when they’re writing, they can have their stories and they can go with it but again, those instructions getting to those different steps – or getting to those different points, being very clear when you’re writing a paragraph, what do you need at the start of your paragraph. What are your details? What’s your conclusion?

Just reinforcing those topics really well. When we talked about adjectives, going through those really really small steps that the assessment kind of on the spot, making sure I kind of see where they’re all at with everything as well I think applies to every subject before moving on to the next thing. Do they all have this step?

Martina: Yeah.

A-Gr3: Yeah.

Martina: Okay. What are your – what goals are currently your priorities for improving your teaching of Math?

A-Gr3: I think my goal for myself is just continuing to work on – I think – I think my goal would be – there would be a few goals. One would be just overall continuing to work on my comfort level of having people in the classroom. Realizing that they are there to see the Math, not the classroom management always.

But – so I think part of that is just increasing my comfort level with that. Speaking up if I am uncomfortable with something. I think in terms of the actual Math teaching as well, I think what I’m most interested to see next year as well is having gone through the JUMP program in its entirety for one year, how is that going to help me next year and using my experiences this year to really shape my teaching for next year as well and taking our PD sessions and taking all of those things and applying them.

So things like, for instance, the Whiteboards which I love having those Whiteboards in my class where I can assess, we didn’t have those for the first little while at the start of the year and so that was one of the things I was trying to figure out how am I going to get those little mini sessions done all the way through and, like I said, the Whiteboards are amazing to me and so I think again, having some of those tools in place right away, using them and, yeah.

But, yeah, I think my biggest goal is kind of take all my experiences from this year and really use it to help me teach next year, help me meet all those kids’ needs.

Martina: Okay. And Question Five. One of the principles that drives JUMP Math is that the vast majority of students can succeed with challenging Math. What do you think about this principle?

A-Gr3: Yeah. I think honestly, it needs to be – students need to experience success in order to want to do something. You’re not going to want to do something if you can’t do it. And I think especially at the elementary level, it’s so critical that the kids are successful with it so that they don’t have the attitude of I was never good at Math or I can’t do that or I’m not going to need that. I’m going to choose a job that doesn’t need Math or whatever those comments happen to be because I think honestly kids want to do things. I want to do things that I’m good at.

You want to spend time doing things that you feel comfortable with and that you – yeah. And I think that is huge, that they can be successful and I know you’ve spoken a lot about public success and so I think that’s absolutely huge as well. So kids do want to put their hand up if they have something or just how great they feel when you write awesome job at the top of their – the page that they’re working on or – yeah, but they can all feel that sense of – sense of accomplishment and they want to keep doing it.

Martina: And you have a class with like a really diverse range of learners and you felt – you feel that you’ve been able to bring them all together to [INDISCERNIBLE].

A-Gr3: Yeah. And they’re certainly – they’re certainly still at different levels. They’re – yeah, and they – definitely there’s a huge range in the classroom. But even the kids who – it’s not just the kids who always have their hands up that are the only ones who have their hands up, if that makes sense.

The kids that don’t – aren’t – don’t typically have their hands up as much, when their hand goes up, definitely I call on them and they’re really proud when they – they do have the right answer. And yeah, like they’re getting constant praise with how they’re doing and – and if they aren’t understanding something just breaking it down just a little bit more for them and all of a sudden, oh, yeah, I can do that. And it’s made a huge difference for them.

Martina: Great.

A-Gr3: Yeah.

Martina: Okay, so the last question is kind of just a wrap up. You may have covered everything, but having participated in this interview, does anything else come to mind that you would offer to teachers at the hub school, to the research team or even to JUMP developers as we embark on the next phase of the project?

A-Gr3: All I can say really is the JUMP program, I have to say I’ve been really happy with it. It’s done really good things in my classroom and, like I said, there continues to be a huge range of abilities but everyone can be successful. Everyone can find success, whether it’s being pulled – some material from the Grade 2 or whatever it happens to be, but everyone’s finding success in it and it really is – it’s working and I think the students’ success in it is going to speak volumes to help it working as well.

Martina: Okay. Nice. Okay, well, that’s all. Thank you for your time and, yeah.

**[End of audio]**

**[Duration: 46:18]**