

4.3 FAQs

Q1. What is Mindspark?

Mindspark is a computer-based, adaptive, self-learning program that helps a child to improve his/her skills in Maths. It allows each student to follow a learning path that is based on their current level of understanding and at a pace they are comfortable with.

Q2. Who created Mindspark?

Mindspark has been created by a team of maths experts at Educational Initiatives. The team designed Mindspark after carrying out intensive research on the data of student performances in ASSET tests conducted over many years in order to discover the different learning patterns among children.

Q3. How is Mindspark unique?

- Students learn by answering questions
- Mindspark focuses on understanding of concepts
- Questions, based on Adaptive Logic, are tailored to the child's knowledge level
- It addresses common errors & misconceptions
- Answers include in-depth explanations
- It uses visuals and animations for effective learning

Q4. How is Mindspark different from other e-learning programmes?

Mindspark judges the current level of understanding in the chosen topic and asks those questions which gradually help the student to understand and master the concept. Each question, at every step will be 'just beyond' the current level of understanding, and not very much beyond, as the student should be able to answer it correctly and learn in the process. This process – of learning through answering questions – has been found to be effective in helping students learn, rather than merely sharing with student videos, animation or materials to read.

When a student answers a question correctly, the next question given to him is of a higher difficulty level. When the student fails to answer a question correctly, Mindspark adapts itself to the student's level of understanding without the student's knowledge. The questions asked help Mindspark probe into the student's level of understanding and help him to overcome his/her misconceptions. Mindspark intelligently helps the student to bridge the learning gap. When the student starts understanding and answering correctly, he comes back to the level from where he/she had initially struggled and from there he/she works to move to a higher level.

Q5. How will Mindspark help my child?

Mindspark uses finely graded questions to explain mathematical concepts. Answering these questions helps the student to build strong fundamentals. Mindspark has a built-in adaptive logic that allows a student to proceed at his/her own pace, depending on their level of comfort in a particular concept. This helps in improving the confidence of the child when solving more challenging maths problems.

Q6. Is Mindspark available for other subjects?

Thanks for showing an interest in the Mindspark programme for English, Science, Social studies and Hindi. Currently we do not have Mindspark for these subjects, but we are already planning to add a few of them in the near future.

Q7. For which grades/grade-levels is Mindspark appropriate?

Mindspark has currently been designed for grades 1 through 10 - the grades that focus on developing key concepts in students.

Q8. Is Mindspark in line with the syllabus of the boards?

Yes, Mindspark is aligned to NCERT recommendations as well as to ICSE, CBSE and various other state boards. We have also integrated the IGCSE curriculum in Mindspark

Q9. How can I Subscribe/Register for Mindspark?

Visit the Mindspark website (www.mindspark.in) and select "Buy Mindspark" (www.mindspark.in/registrationform.php)

Q10. Is it possible for my child to learn by only answering questions?

A remarkable feature of Mindspark is that it's an adaptive learning program. This means that it will examine a learner's current level of understanding in a particular topic and ask only those questions that will help the learner to gradually understand concepts that were missing in the learner's understanding of the topic. Each question, at every step, will be 'just outside' a learner's current level of understanding, but not too much as we want the learner to answer correctly and also learn in the process. This process – of learning through answering questions – has been found to be very effective all over the world as compared to simply reading a block of text along with some visuals.

Q11. Would using Mindspark help my child get more marks?

The focus in Mindspark is to help the child learn well, with understanding. We believe that when children learn the basics with understanding, this has a long term impact on how they perform in those topics as well as in those built upon them. Thus we predict a strong correlation between performance in school tests and regular practice in Mindspark. Studies have already indicated that students understand concepts better by using Mindspark; we will also be conducting studies to establish the relationship between improved understanding through Mindspark and improved scores in school tests.

Q12. How do I know about my child's performance in Mindspark?

1. Every month Mindspark will mail out a detailed report to the parents. These reports will show the level the child has reached in each topic, the time taken by the child to master a concept, the success rate and number of logins and so on. The report to the teacher will provide additional information on the performance of the entire class.
2. **Mindspark Parent Portal** -The Mindspark Parent Portal provides parents a real and true insight into the level of their child's engagement in terms of
 - What is the child currently doing in Mindspark?
 - What has the child done in Mindspark till date?
 - What is the duration of the child's involvement in each of the Topics in Mindspark?

- How much is the child actually learning through Mindspark?
- The learning gaps/misconceptions captured by Mindspark.

Q13. In Mindspark, if my child is presented with problems in math concepts that have not been taught in school, should my child still continue to do them?

Yes! Mindspark has been designed primarily as a learning program. Children are free to continue solving as Mindspark is equipped to introduce concepts and topics hitherto not taught to the child in school.

Q14. If my child gets a number of questions that he/she says are simple, what should I do?

Simple questions ensure that the child is equipped to take on the tougher ones. We have found that students are able to do certain questions, yet some of the basics are not completely clear. This affects later learning. Therefore, even if the questions appear simple, the child should attempt these questions as this reinforces concepts.

Q15. My child says many questions are repeated. What should I do?

Questions are repeated in special conditions when the system determines that a student needs extra practice. The student should therefore attempt these questions patiently and answer them correctly.

Q16. What happens after my child has finished all the topics assigned to her?

Once the student has finished all topics, she has the flexibility of visiting any topic she wishes to revise or practice. Please note that data that is aggregated to report progress on every topic is based on the child's last completed attempt.

Q17. Does my child need to do Mindspark every day?

The recommended frequency of practice in Mindspark is 30 minutes a day for 4 days a week. Mindspark provides a student with regular practice and we believe that there can be no substitute for that. In cases, when the student misses practice on some days, he can spend a little more time on the remaining days.

On any day a user can login for multiple sessions of 30 minutes each. However, after 30 minutes, system will automatically log out the user and the user can login again. The daily time limit is 90 minutes with no restriction on the number of login (sessions). If a user has completed 90 minutes of Mindspark in a day, the system will not allow further logins. The 90 minute time limit mainly to allow students to catch up on sessions they missed. Remember that the recommended usage still remains 30 minutes a day for 4 days a week. It is desirable to space out sessions over an entire week, rather than do many sessions intensively over one or two days followed by long gaps!

Q18. Why do some of the questions take more time to appear?

One feature of Mindspark is that it's an intelligent program. Many times, while the child is trying to working out the answer for a question, Mindspark will try to find the next best question to ask the child. This may involve examining the child's answers to the previous questions and identifying the gaps in the child's understanding that need to be addressed. Thus, there could be a few questions that take a little more time than others to appear.

Q19. Will there be page loading issue at home?

This issue could happen due to several possible reasons. You can open the site www.speedtest.net whenever you are experiencing slow speed in Mindspark and send us the results of the speed test. This may give us some insights to the problem you are facing and will help us sort out the problem.

Q20. Is there an ideal browser for using Mindspark?

Mindspark has been designed to work on Internet Explorer 9, Mozilla Firefox and Chrome. We recommend that you use one of these browsers to enjoy the Mindspark experience.

Q21. Why is my child unable to view visuals and animations in some of the questions?

This is probably because the Flash Player plug-in is not installed on the browser. This is an additional software that is needed to view certain animations and visuals. You can download Flash Player from this link: www.get.adobe.com/flashplayer

Q22. What should be done when a blank screen appears after login?

Please delete the cache, cookies and browser history from your machine and login again.

Please email us a screenshot of the issue to mindspark@ei-india.com.

Q23. My child complains about right answers being marked wrong, why does this happen?

This could happen when a student has not understood the question and answered incorrectly, has made an error when submitting the answer by typing the wrong characters or added extra characters or space e.g. yes,2/; has entered the answer in the wrong format. e.g. Yes, yes, y, Y

Q24. Why does the topic progress not move ahead?

When a child has difficulties with a learning unit in a topic, Mindspark gives selective questions to improve the child's understanding of the basics. These questions do not increase the progress. When the child achieves a better understanding of the basics, Mindspark again starts asking you the regular questions. The progress percent increases as the percentage of correct answers for the regular questions increases.

Q25. Does Mindspark work on iPad?

We are in the process of making Mindspark compatible with iPad and this will be 100% compatible by March 2014. At the moment all our content that uses flash (games, remedials, etc) may not work on the iPad but all the questions will work. Approx 70% of Mindspark will work on the iPad and the remaining content will be skipped.

Q26. What is a Sparkie and how does a child get a Sparkie?

Sparkie is a reward given to students and is applicable for students of grades 1 to 7. For grades 8 and above, Sparkies get replaced by reward points. 1 Sparkie = 10 reward points.

The Sparkie awarded for regular Mindspark questions and Challenge Questions answered correctly is based on the logic stated below:

Number of attempts in a Topic	Number of consecutive correct answers needed to earn 1 Sparkie
1 st and 2nd	3
3rd, 4th, 5th	4
6th, 7th, 8th, 9th	5
10th till 20th	
21st and above	NO SPARKIES

Number of attempts made to solve a Challenge Question	Number of Sparkies awarded for the correct answer
1st	5
2nd	2

The student also earns Sparkies for his/her performance in the Monthly Revision Session, the logic for which is explained below –

- If the no. of questions attempted are <20, no Sparkie.
- If the no. of questions attempted ≥ 20 and % correct between 60 & 74- 2 Sparkies.
- If the no. of questions attempted ≥ 20 and % correct between 75 & 89- 5 Sparkies.
- If the no. of questions attempted ≥ 20 and % correct ≥ 90 - 10 Sparkies i.e. a super Sparkie.

Q27. How is the 'Sparkie Champ of the Week' selected?

There is no definite number of Sparkies designated to become the weekly champ. The highest Sparkie earner in a normal week is announced as the Sparkie Champ of the Week. If a child's usage is high along with a higher number of accurate answers, the child has a greater chance of becoming one.

Q28. Who should we contact in case of a query/concern on Mindspark?

The Customer Support Information is given in the Customer Support Section of this Manual.

Q29. Does using Mindspark involve downloading software in my Desktop/laptop?

Mindspark is a website hence doesn't require any software to be downloaded. The "Hardware and Software Requirement" section in the Appendix of this Manual states the minimal technical specifications that support Mindspark.

Q30. Why is it that my child gets lesser number of Sparkies when she does a repeat attempt on a Topic?

We have made a small change in the rules of Mindspark to award Sparkies. The number of Sparkies awarded to a child for every attempt (other than the first and second attempt) of the same topic will be lesser than the ones earned in the previous attempt. Refer to Q 26 for the Sparkie Logic.