

# Online aid for the math-challenged

By Ramya Kannan

**CHENNAI, AUG. 30.** Mathematics! If that word makes you cringe, here is news that may well help you shed that irrational number-related fear.

An online educational platform, HeyMath! ([www.hey-math.com](http://www.hey-math.com)) is seeking to inculcate mathematical thinking among children, in a manner they will enjoy. Launched by Sankyaa Learning, HeyMath is a collaborative venture between Nrich Online Maths Club and the Millennium Mathematics Project of the University of Cambridge, U.K. It marries pedagogical practices and technology to provide mathematical concepts that are simple or complex in a

manner children can understand best.

"HeyMath is a learning system complementary to classroom teaching. It won't replace the blackboard. We produce technology-enabled lessons, with creative animation that makes learning enjoyable," says Nirmala Sankaran, managing director, Sankyaa Learning. The lessons are provided online. Innovations are made with the multiple resources that are available.

What HeyMath attempts to do is to provide the creative impetus that a teacher can use and elaborate on.

In addition to lessons, the online resource, which is licensed out to schools and in turn to a number of students,

can provide homework, a 24-hour helpline and access to an international community of learners and teachers. HeyMath has been operating in Singapore over the last three years. Some 26 schools there are part of the network. Apparently they have found the association beneficial as the student testimonials on the site indicate.

The advantage with HeyMath is that the resources are available to the student at home. "HeyMath helps them take lessons at home, prepare in advance for class, revise, solve problems at home and even have their work assessed," says Harsh Rajan, managing director, Sankyaa.

"Even if the teacher is not

present, the child can post a query and have a peer or a senior answer it from anywhere in the world," Mr. Rajan explains.

In India, HeyMath has evolved a package for the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) syllabus. The first school to sign up was Padma Seshadri Bala Bhavan, Chennai. Efforts are on to integrate it with the curriculum and to meet the needs of the teachers, Ms. Sankaran says.

She adds: "We want to take it beyond the private school, definitely. Though infrastructure compatibility is still a problem at public schools, we are certainly looking at that segment too, in addition to different boards of study."