



SUCCESS STORY

# Pleasant Hill Students Make McGraw-Hill My Math Their Own

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Name

Pleasant Hill Elementary School

Location

Hemingway, South Carolina

Enrollment

401



## McGraw-Hill My Math at Pleasant Hill Elementary

“McGraw-Hill My Math not only meets the range of student learning abilities in the district, but also aligns the school’s curriculum with the Common Core,” said Candice Gaster, the fifth grade math teacher of 18 years.

Gaster’s assertion is in fact, the very reason McGraw-Hill My Math was adopted at Pleasant Hill Elementary School.

As one of three schools in the rural Florence County District Five, Johnsonville Middle School currently serves approximately 400 children in grades 5 through 8. The district received a Good rating on the state’s Absolute Rating measurement in 2013 and it participates in the Making Middle Grades Work, a program of the Southern Regional Education Board that works with states to ensure students are prepared for the rigor of high school.



# McGraw-Hill My Math

## The McGraw-Hill My Math Approach

Pleasant Hill began using McGraw-Hill My Math during the 2013-2014 school year and in 2013, the school's math performance outpaced similar South Carolina middle schools as well as middle schools statewide.

Gaster says McGraw-Hill My Math's approach works for all of her students because it offers differentiated instruction for every level of student and should help ensure the school district continues to improve its math scores each year, a fact Gaster is very proud of.

With McGraw-Hill My Math, students have many opportunities to practice procedural skills throughout the lesson and tackle harder, higher-order thinking problems at the end of the lesson. Gaster says this method works well at different learning levels because it ensures each concept is mastered before students move on.

"In the fifth-grade math program, there is a chapter/lesson on different ways of dividing multi-digit whole numbers using the expanded form," Gaster says. "Many students caught on very quickly to that concept."

Emphasizing vocabulary, problem-solving and real-world applications, McGraw-Hill My Math addresses the "big concepts" included in the Common Core. Designed to foster student engagement, the curriculum includes high-quality, visually appealing, and age appropriate books that help students make the programs their own. All the while, students are practicing procedural skills throughout the lesson and tackling harder, higher-order thinking problems at the end of each lesson.

## The Rigor and Results of McGraw-Hill My Math

While McGraw-Hill My Math allows students to progress at their own pace, it also introduces rigor into lessons that's important for continual improvement. Gaster says the curriculum does this by teaching multiple problem-solving strategies that allow students to model math and construct arguments that become habits of mind, resulting in strong conceptual understanding. "It follows a progression. It gives plenty of practice on a skill before jumping to something else. It is very focused."

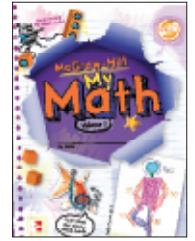
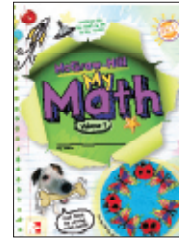
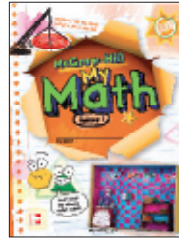
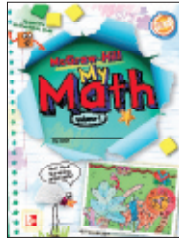
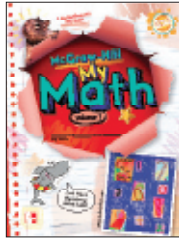
Seventy-nine percent of the students at Johnsonville Middle School met or exceeded the South Carolina state standards in mathematics in 2013. Gaster expects McGraw-Hill My Math to be a crucial tool in helping students at all levels to make progress throughout the year.

"We have some students in very rural areas, some in very poor areas and some in wealthy areas of the county," she says, "but we experience an increase in math scores every year. We are usually right on target or above the state average on our state math assessments. We always meet the adequate yearly progress standards set for us in math, and as the demand for higher percentages increases, we meet that goal every year."

McGraw-Hill My Math focuses on the Common Core's three components of rigor:

1. Conceptual Understanding
2. Procedural Skill and Fluency
3. Application

which are woven throughout the program in equal intensity, allowing students to progress toward a higher level of achievement.



## Inspiring Love of Math with McGraw-Hill My Math

McGraw-Hill My Math engages and inspires lifelong learning of math by giving students and teachers the digital and personalization tools that make challenging assignments fun while still meeting the expectations of the Common Core.

“The kids love having their own books to write in,” Gaster says. Tools such as write-in books; Foldables®

and foam manipulatives; modern, to-the-point games; and videos capture students’ attention and give students new ways to visualize and find ways to make math classes their own.

This hands-on, personalized approach to math class leads to many more ah-hah moments for students, helping the lesson “click” and come to life, according to Gaster.



*“We experience an increase in math scores every year.”*

Candice Gaster  
Fifth Grade Teacher