

启发儿童智慧的奥秘03

Chapter 1 The Story of a Child Prodigy in Mental Arithmetic

Not knowing the answer to $7+2$

Su Wan Ting's motto:

Yield twice the result with half the effort, and not half the result with twice the effort.

The successful person looks for methods. The unsuccessful person looks for excuses.

“What's $1+1$?”

“2!” Kindergarteners screamed.

“What's $2+3$?”

This problem may be a little “difficult” for K1 children, but for K2 children, it is easy to get the answer simply by counting fingers.

Of course, you might ask them again, “What's $3+2$?” and they might have to count fingers again. “

Three at dawn and four at dusk” and “Four at dawn and three at dusk” is definitely different to children who are just four or five years old.

Quiet and introverted since birth, Su Wan Ting was no different from her classmates at Tainan Jen Her Kids Kindergarten. To count numbers, she simply counted the fingers on her little hands, though at times, little Wan Ting would have a “short circuit,” characterized by a sudden “knotting” of the fingers and a “blank” mind; a few tomatoes +several guavas turn into a fruit platter. One day, bored at home, Wan Ting's grandpa decided to play counting a game with little Wan Ting. If she counted correctly, grandpa would buy her a treat.

“Come. Count from 1 to 10. Start.”

This was too easy. He was underestimating his granddaughter. “1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,9, 10.” Without taking a single breath, Little Wan Ting finished counting from 1 to 10.

“Ok. Next. What's $1+2$?”

“3!” Little Wan Ting took a glimpse at her fingers, and answered quickly. “Not bad. Another one. What's $7+2$?” Grandpa was serious this time. “It's...” Little Wan Ting's hands were twisted in a bundle, with the 7 in her right hand running to her left, and not knowing where to start counting the remaining 2. As her hands tightened, her head drooped lower and her face reddened.

“Aww. I'm sorry. Has Grandpa made the question too hard? Let's try a different one. One that's easier, ok?” Grandpa said, trying to make Wan Ting feel better.

Close by, Wan Ting's father Su Jui Pin, reading the paper and Wan Ting's mother Su Hua Dan, working on her at home job looked at each

other and frowned. They did not seem to agree with grandpa! The couple did not say anything in front of the old man and the little girl. As usual, they waited until bedtime to talk about things to prevent putting too much pressure on their child. That night, Mr. Su wondered why Wan Ting couldn't solve such a simple problem. She was in K2 already and should be doing better than this. Mrs. Su blamed herself and was extremely worried. "Maybe I didn't plan her preschool education well enough. Let's just wait and see."

Perhaps out of oversensitivity, or loving care, Wan Ting's one "abnormal" incident had Mr. and Mrs. Su thinking seriously about her education and growing needs. They didn't want her to fall before she even started running; as parents, they would be the ones to blame if that were the case.