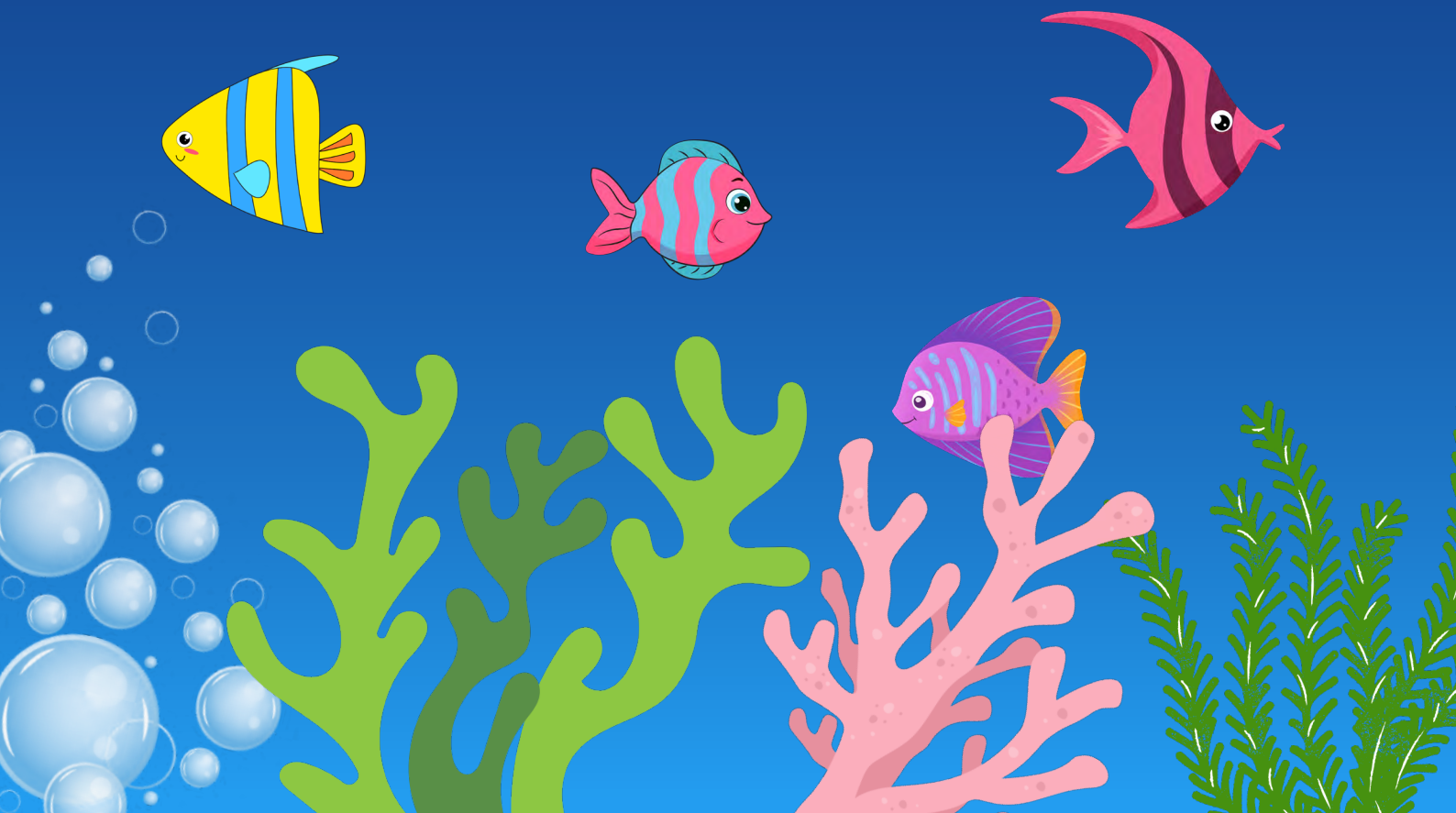
awesomenicity

inspired learning

Tackling maths anxiety head-on

Helping every child feel confident with maths



What exactly is maths anxiety?

How to spot the signs

Walk into almost any classroom and you'll see it. A child staring at a blank page, frozen. Another scribbling as fast as possible, desperate to be done. A hand shoots up "Can I go sharpen my pencil?" (again). On the surface it looks like avoidance, but underneath it's something deeper... **it's maths anxiety.**

This isn't about ability. Research shows most anxious learners are perfectly capable, yet fear hijacks their working memory, crowding out reasoning and recall. Bright children end up second-guessing themselves, rushing or disengaging altogether.

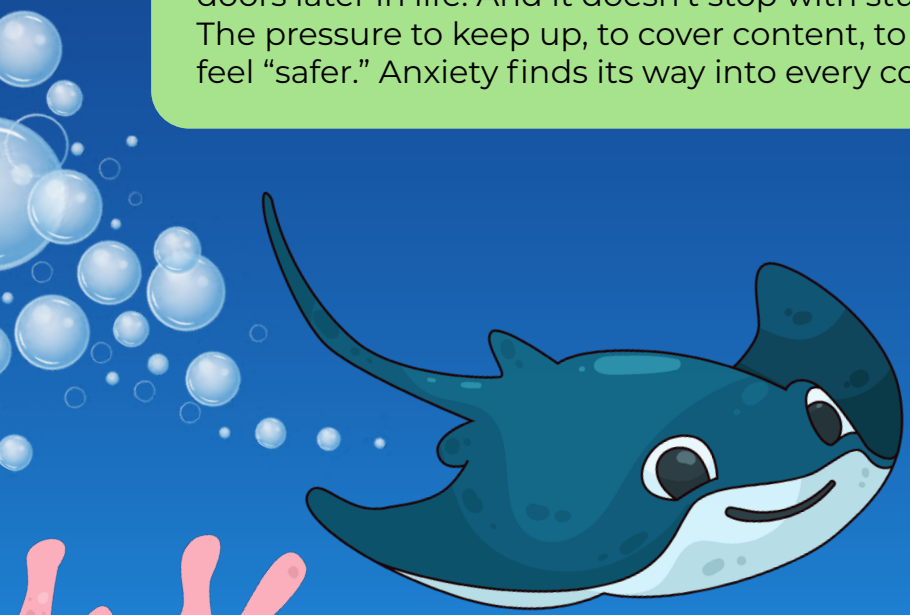
77% of anxious learners

are normal-to-high achievers.

(National Numeracy 2019)

What is the cost of not addressing maths anxiety?

The cost is high. Confidence slips and "I can" becomes "I can't." Early wobbles grow into fewer subject choices, limited careers and closed doors later in life. And it doesn't stop with students, teachers feel it too. The pressure to keep up, to cover content, to rely on drills because they feel "safer." Anxiety finds its way into every corner of the classroom.



How do you recognise maths anxiety?

Maths anxiety isn't always loud. It hides in small moments, the fidgeting, the pencil sharpening, the quiet "I don't get it" or "I'm not a maths person." Over time, those signs build into patterns of fear and avoidance. And it doesn't stop with children, teachers and parents unknowingly can carry those same anxieties.

Have you seen these signs?

For children:

- Students freeze or rush through work ("hesitation, rushing, avoidance").
- They disengage, switch off and lose confidence.
- "I'm not a maths person" is a fixed mindset.

For teachers:

- The pressure to rush content, prep for assessments and tick boxes.
- Over reliance on drills/ tests/worksheets because they feel "safe."
- Less space for inquiry or deep understanding.

For parents:

- Well-meaning phrases like "I was never good at maths" or "This is easy, let me show you" reinforce anxiety rather than confidence.

Recognising these signs is the first step. Once you see them, you can respond differently. Shifting the focus from speed and perfection to curiosity and confidence. Maths anxiety may be widespread, but with the right awareness and strategies, it doesn't have to define how children, teachers or families experience maths.

Why tackling maths anxiety at primary age matters

No teacher ever wants to hear a child say, “I’m not a maths person.” But for many, maths anxiety becomes part of their identity, shaping how they see themselves, what they choose to study and even the opportunities they believe are possible.

What starts in a primary classroom doesn’t stay there. Anxiety around maths can ripple outward, echoing through exams, career choices, everyday confidence and even long-term wellbeing.

The ripple effect of maths anxiety:

Curriculum choices
Students drop higher-level maths, sciences or economics because they believe they “can’t do it.”

Exam performance
Even when they know the content, anxiety undercuts recall and performance.

Career pathways
Limits entry into STEM, finance, data and other maths-linked fields.

Everyday life skills
Budgeting, financial planning, cooking with weights and measures, and time management become harder.

Confidence & self-image
“I’m not a maths person” becomes part of their identity, undermining resilience and risk-taking.

Mental health
Long-term stress and fear around maths feed into wider anxiety and avoidance behaviours.

Social equity
Numeracy gaps compound disadvantage, making it harder to break cycles of poverty.

1 in 5 young people

say their mental health has suffered due to struggles with maths

(National Numeracy UK, 2024)

This isn’t just one child’s story. It’s a global educational challenge, with lifelong consequences. **Tackling it early matters.**

Making maths feel manageable

Reducing maths anxiety doesn't mean tearing up your lesson plans. Often it's about small, manageable shifts in practice that help anxious learners feel safe while still stretching the rest of the class.

Here are some strategies...

Discovery over Drills	**Curiosity over Speed**	**Growth Mindset over Fixed Ability**
Give learners time to think and reason deeply	**Encourage persistence and confidence**	**Let curiosity drive fluency, not fear**
Drills create pressure for anxious learners. Discovery tasks such as puzzles, visuals and discussion, grow fluency through curiosity instead of fear.	Timed tests trigger panic and mistakes. Giving space to think encourages deeper reasoning and calmer feelings.	Labels like "I'm not a maths person" can stick for life. Encouraging a growth mindset opens doors and builds resilience.

Awesomenicity is designed to make these shifts possible without extra planning. Ready-to-use lessons, structured slides and tiered challenges give teachers the confidence to support every learner, including those who feel anxious about maths.

"Anxiety overloads working memory and blocks recall."

Beilock, S. L., & Maloney, E. A. (2015).

The only resource designed to reduce maths anxiety head-on.

Awesomenicity wasn't born in a boardroom. It was born in real classrooms. Where growth mindset, capable children sat in front of their teachers saying, "I hate maths." It wasn't maths they feared... it was the way it was being taught, drills, speed tests and one-size-fits-all textbooks that chipped away at confidence until fear replaced curiosity.

Eloïse saw it as a principal in Africa, Europe, US and the Middle East, with high achievers freezing the moment a task was timed.

Hannah saw it in Kazakhstan and Malawi, with worksheets so rigid they left too many children behind.

Caitlin saw it in Australia, students in remote communities who needed maths to feel visual, real and human.

Different countries. Different systems. The same problem.

So the three of them came together to create something different:

- Easing the pressure with no drills, no timers, no races
- Encouraging curiosity through stories, visuals, games and inquiry
- Layered challenges, giving every child a way in

Awesomenicity exists because its founders have been there, in front of anxious learners, with endless planning on their desks, searching for better ways to help every child thrive. It's not theory. It's not a quick-fix app. It's a classroom-ready resource built by real classroom teachers, to make maths something children don't just survive, but actually enjoy. **Because no child should ever grow up believing, "I'm just not a maths person."**

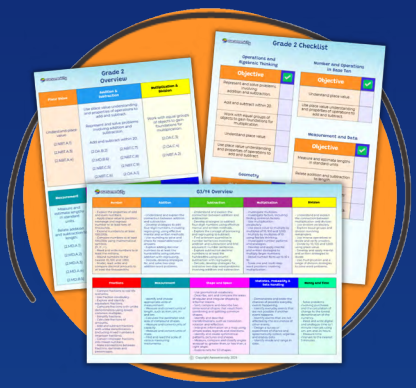
Inside the Awesomenicity resources

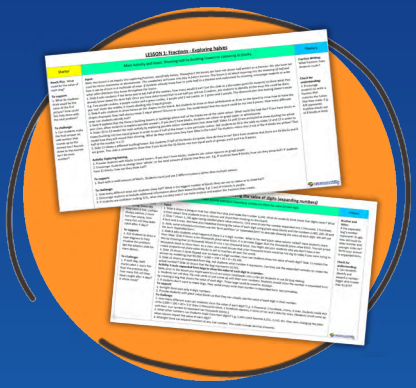
Moving from rote learning to inquiry-led maths can feel like a big shift. Awesomenicity is designed to make it feel possible, giving teachers ready-to-use lessons, simple scaffolds and a community to lean on, so confidence grows for everyone.

Curriculum Guides

- Coverage for UK, US, Australian & International curricula
- Fully aligned to standards with topic checklists
- Ensure every learning outcome is covered

Teach with confidence, knowing curriculum demands are fully met.





Planners

- Step-by-step lesson structure: starter, main, activity & plenary
- Support and challenge built into every stage
- “Greener alternatives” reduce printing and add flexibility

Save time with all differentiation guidance built in.

Lesson Slideshows

- Narrative lessons with themed stories and characters
- Familiar format builds comfort and routine
- Three learning zones: Sunlight (support), Twilight (core), Midnight (extend)
- Got-It challenges deepen reasoning
- Animal “guides” model curiosity and critical thinking

Help every learner feel safe, curious & challenged at their level.

Starter Activities

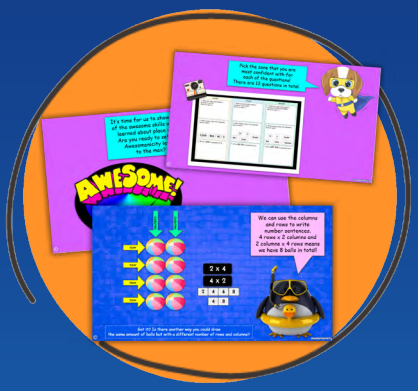
- Open-ended reasoning and number talk tasks
- Revisit key objectives throughout the year
- Low floor, high ceiling design—accessible yet challenging

Reduce panic & boost engagement from the first minute.

Input and Modelling

- Starts with inquiry prompts, not step-copying
- Students explore, notice patterns & share strategies
- Deepens conceptual understanding
- Real-world links make maths meaningful

Build understanding that lasts, not just memorisation.



Activities, Plenaries, and Assessments

- Games, puzzles & problem-solving challenges
- Differentiated printables and scaffolds
- Plenaries that consolidate and celebrate learning
- Tiered assessments with self-reflection & rubrics

Create inclusive classrooms with visible progress.

How to start a lesson today:

In just a few minutes you can explore lessons designed to ease anxiety, encourage curiosity and help every child feel more confident with maths.

1.

Spot the learners who say, “I’m not good at maths.”

Notice who hesitates, avoids eye contact, or freezes when the word “maths” comes up. They’re the ones who’ll benefit most from Awesomenicity.

2.

Scan/click the QR code to start your free trial.

Create your teacher account in seconds and access a growing library of lessons, slides and resources.

3.

Open your first lesson and start exploring.

Everything’s ready for you, no prep needed. Build confidence and curiosity one lesson at a time.

Lead the change towards confident maths learning

www.awesomenicity.com/free-trial-landing hello@awesomenicity.com