



Bridge and Young People

It has long been believed by those who teach and are also involved in bridge that learning the game or a simplified version of it Minibridge will benefit school pupils not only in their education but in later years when they have more time available and look to a leisure pursuit which will have benefits to their health.

David Adelman, the EBU's Manchester Youth Officer and an experienced Bridge teacher states: *"Minibridge is a simplified version of bridge... and is a game which is suitable for classroom use and which allows children the opportunity to improve their logical and lateral thinking skills within the framework of play. It offers dynamic brain training. Dealing with symbols (of the playing cards) requires focus and concentration. Playing with three other players at the same table also helps develop personal confidence, communication skills and sociability. Playing cooperatively with a partner encourages team building and inter-personal awareness. Success at the game is dependent on accurate data handling and reliable counting."*

Sir Peter Williams, Chair of the Government's Advisory Committee on Maths Education, delivered his "Independent Review of Mathematics Teaching in Early Years Settings and Primary Schools" in June 2008. He made the following statements in his report: *"... the costs to society of an innumerate population, highlights, unsurprisingly, that the financial impact of mathematics is considerable. With one quarter of national GDP resulting from the mathematics based financial services sector, the importance of mathematics in general hardly needs stating."*

"A closely allied concern is that too little attention is paid to building good attitudes to mathematics. Clearly, if children's interests are not kindled through using and applying mathematics in interesting and engaging ways, and through learning across the full mathematics curriculum, they are unlikely to develop good attitudes to the subject."

"The tentative, early findings are striking – the Every Child A Chance Trust estimates that for every pound spent on early intervention for the lowest attaining pupils, at least £12 will be saved long-term on the costs to the public purse."

Sir Peter was also quoted on news programmes of the need to make maths fun so that parents can also take part in their child's education.

Minibridge or bridge would fulfil this need and bring families together in a low cost pastime that has untold benefits for society as a whole.

Research is available as follows:

Burman, L. H. 2002. Minibridge Research Project, St. Pauls Primary School, Manchester, England. EBU
Shaw, C. Statistically Speaking. Researcher finds links between bridge and improved test scores in children.
American Contract Bridge League, Bridge Bulletin(10) 2006. P 22.