

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parent,

Your child has been selected to participate in the Challenge Stage of the Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians (MCYA). This is a problem-solving activity organised by the Australian Mathematics Trust that is aimed at the top 15% of students in their year level.

The MCYA Challenge Stage takes place over three to four weeks in Term 1 or Term 2. Students receive a problem booklet containing 6 problems (Years 7 to 10 – Junior and Intermediate levels) or 4 problems (Years 3 to 7 – Middle and Upper Primary levels). Students are required to present written solutions to as many of these problems as they can. The problems are challenging and require time and persistence, but are based on mathematics that should be known at that level. Students in the Junior and Intermediate levels may work with a partner who has also entered the Challenge, while students in the Primary levels may work in groups of up to three. Each student must submit separate solutions.

Teachers mark the submitted solutions from marking schemes and solutions provided by the Australian Mathematics Trust in the Teacher Guide. This also provides alternative solutions, some discussion of the origin, mathematics and teaching issues associated with each problem, and some extension problems with solutions; it is a valuable classroom resource. Marks are submitted to the Australian Mathematics Trust and, after processing, certificates are issued.

Students are allowed to seek help from any resources other than human ones—textbooks, encyclopaedias, etc., calculators and computers. Note that websites offering help with problems are really human resources and not allowed, but the use of a computer-based encyclopaedia or a website providing information of a general nature is quite alright. Teachers will be checking on progress from time to time and may be able to answer questions of clarification. Some class time will be set aside for consultation with partners.

I hope the MCYA Challenge is an enjoyable and valuable learning experience for your child.

Yours sincerely,