



Mathivation movement comes to Ruamrudee!

Igniting inspiration for mathematics and developing mathematical thinking

While schools, governments, academia and industry are struggling on their knees to motivate students with declining interest in mathematics, there has emerged a phenomenon previously unheard of, a movement that is taking over as much as its results are difficult to explain. They call it *Mathivation*.

Middle School students were inspired on September 29 by two young gentlemen on a world tour conducting inspirational talks on Math. Farid Nolen, a student of Engineering Physics at Chalmers University of Technology and his colleague, Ismail Pelaseyed, a Chemistry student at Gothenburg University in Sweden have held over 570 motivational presentations for almost 29,000 people in 10 countries. They were in Bangkok on the invitation of Mr. Said Irandoust, President of the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and we were delighted they were able to spend the day at RIS.

Farid and Ismail inspire students to think about mathematics from the perspective of training. Mathematics

is just like exercise. Why do people, especially athletes, waste their time going to the gym and repeatedly lifting a 10 kg dumbbell 8 times in awkward motions? Have you seen a soccer player suddenly sit down and pull a rope attached to 70 kg weights 15 times? The exercise in itself may appear as pointless, but the muscle it helps build is everything but useless. It is useful in almost everything you do where you use your body.

Now, mathematics is like a gym for building brain muscles; muscles that are used in almost everything you do involving your brain! What brain muscles? When you are breaking down each exercise and solving it step by step, you become more analytic. When you are dealing with x , your brain is learning the art of abstract thinking and you become better at generalizing. Mathematics also develops your brain to be able to handle bigger systems and more complex structures. Mathematics helps you to understand things on a more holistic and principal basis instead of just filling your brain with information for each specific case.



You become less prone to be misled by deceiving statistics and you can better see through deluding argumentation. When you are sitting in your job interview, the employer might not care if you remember the Pythagorean Theorem, but how significant do you reckon your mathematical way of thinking is for you getting the job and carrying out your tasks?

Middle school students at RIS sum it up, "The lecture made me understand more about why mathematics is important, why we use it in our daily lives, and why you can get a job when you are good at math." "I never knew that math really help us. Now that I know that math is really important needs to be practiced more and more every day, I'm going to put my best effort in every single homework assignment and test." "...it was the best lecture ever!"