

**PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE AND TASK PERFORMANCE AS PREDICTORS  
OF GIRLS' AND BOYS' INTEREST IN LOW-STAKES ASSESSMENT  
TASKS OF MATHEMATICAL THINKING SKILLS**

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Learning to learn, the willingness and the ability to settle down to novel tasks, is assessed by administering cognitive tasks measuring general reasoning and thinking skills and self-evaluation scales measuring beliefs and attitudes towards learning (Hautamäki et al., 2002). This paper reports on a longitudinal study in which development of pupils' preparedness for learning is followed throughout the nine-year comprehensive school. The aim is to find out how girls' and boys' interest in novel mathematical tasks is affected by school success and actual task performance. The result suggests that mechanisms of task interest are very different for 10-years-old boys and girls. Boys' task interest is highly dependent on their performance level on current task, while girls report higher interest despite of performance level. Previous knowledge in mathematics does not seem to play a significant role in explaining later task interest.