

## Math Learning Tips for Improving Achievement

### When **LEARNING** math **IN CLASS**:

1. Make sure you have all necessary materials such as a pencil, binder, paper, ruler, scientific calculator, and possibly a highlighter.
2. Do math instead of watching math. During lessons, you will be frequently asked to try examples in order to practice a new skill. Try the examples, don't just wait for the answer to be written on the board. Be proactive!
3. Work with a person near you when trying examples. Discuss ideas and check answers with each other. Discussing the math you are doing is an important step to better understanding. Be proactive!
4. Write neat, clear notes so you can use them to study from. Add in extra information that will help you when studying for tests.
5. Develop some abbreviations for your notes to write them quicker.
6. Use assignment time in class effectively. If you work hard when the assignment is given, your homework time will be cut down. Also, it will give you the opportunity to seek help on difficult concepts before you go home. Do not close your books early.

### When **DOING** math assignments **IN** or **OUT** of **CLASS**:

1. Work with a partner or in a small group if possible, but make sure that math is the primary focus.
2. Read the instructions for each question to get used to the mathematical language.
3. Write the question, then all appropriate work, and then the answer **down** the page. Circle or underline the answer. This demonstrates your understanding and it makes your assignments useful for studying. Assignments that just have answers will not be marked.
4. Try to do additions, subtractions, multiplications, and divisions in your brain first, then verify your answer using your calculator. You don't want to rely on your calculator for the answers, but you do want to use it to make sure you have done the work correctly. If you do not know how to punch something into your calculator, ask!
5. Attempt every question. If you don't understand a question, you should still have something written down for it in your assignment. It shows you have made an effort...and you never know, once you start, you just may figure it out!
6. Mark your work using answer keys provided in the binder, or in the back of your text. If you get a question wrong, try to figure out your error and correct it.
7. Put a star on questions that you cannot get, and ask about them in class the next day.
8. If you answer a word problem, you should finish with a sentence answer.
9. Find a time to do your 'main ideas' as it helps you to recap the concepts.

### When **STUDYING** for a math test:

1. Don't assume that you don't have to study for math tests. At this level, it is essential to success.
2. Before studying, organize your notebook and finish all notes & main ideas (this is actually part of your studying!).
3. Start studying at least three days in advance. Make a study schedule that includes actual times in the day and the sections you'll study each day. Do 30-45 minutes per day and then at least 60 minutes the day before. This gives you plenty of time to go over everything and get extra help if you need it. You may end up having a work shift or an event the night before a test so early studying will reduce stress.

4. Study section by section. Remember, the test questions are split up into sections and are labeled as such. Re-read your notes one or more times, concentrating on the examples that are more difficult for you, then cover your examples from your notes and retry. Or retry the questions from your assignment. Then complete the part of the practice test that have questions from the section you're studying. Have a checklist going of any questions you don't understand so you can come in for extra help, or ask about them on review day.
5. Pay special attention to the instructions for each math question you study, as these are the instructions that will be used on the test.
6. The day before the test, go over all sections one more time just to remind yourself of all the skills you need for the test. Also, spend extra time on any areas that are troublesome. Get some help from your teacher if necessary.
7. Get to your test five to ten minutes early and look over everything one more time. Ask any last minute questions.

#### **When WRITING a math test**

1. Try not to get stressed before or during a test. All you can do is your best.
2. Read instructions to each question carefully. Then double check what section the question is from (it's on your test).
3. Show all the work you can. You can get part marks.
4. Circle or underline all answers.
5. Finish all word problems with sentence answers.
6. If you don't understand a question, leave it until the end. You may come at it from a different point of view and be able to figure it out.
7. If you finish early, take a quick break and then go over your test again. So many marks are lost on silly mistakes that could be fixed by checking your test over. Do checks for questions wherever possible, especially if you have the time.
8. Don't hand in your test with any blank responses. Try every question, because sometimes just getting started can help you figure out what to do.

#### **When RECEIVING a test back:**

1. Get the answer key binder and look over all mistakes, and then write the proper steps and answers on questions in which you lost marks.
2. Keep all tests in a section in your binder so that you can use the unit tests to help you prepare for retests and/or the final exam.