

Foundations of Algebra Class Syllabus
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(Any components may be subject to change)

Classroom Rules:

- 1) Please keep yourself and others safe at all times
 - 2) Please respect your learning in addition to the learning of others
 - 3) Please take the responsibility to come to class prepared and ready to learn
 - 4) Please participate and encourage others to do the same
 - 5) Please ask questions if something does not make sense
 - 6) Please be patient with me, your classmates, and yourself; we will not always get it right the first time, and it is important to respect that as part of the journey
- (For additional school rules and consequences, please see the student handbook)

Grading:

In class, student grades are based on 2 categories: Academic and Effort. My philosophy is to emphasize the value of hard work with younger students, and the value of precision to content with older students. So, you'll notice that the effort category is worth more in the earlier classes, and the academic category is worth more in the latter classes.

The following describe how the categories are weighted by class:

Foundations of Algebra
Academic – 60%
Effort – 40%

Algebra 1
Academic – 70%
Effort – 30%

Geometry
Academic – 80%
Effort – 20%

Academic (Quizzes/Tests):

Work that is academic is given under testing conditions. Work of this nature is the best way to tell what students know and don't know about the content itself. It is given individually in a quiet space with virtually unlimited time. The only time consideration that comes up is when grades are due at the end of each term.

Effort (Practice/Behaviors/High School Readiness/Employability):

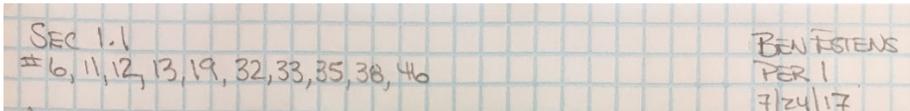
Grades of this nature have to do with the degree to which the student is doing that which is being asked. This is a category that has less to do with the content of the course directly and more to do with the amount of effort or GRIT (Growth, Resilience, Initiative, and Tenacity) that students display. Additionally, work of this nature has due dates and deadlines. Some examples of things that fall under this category include (but are certainly not limited to): proper heading on papers; homework effort, timeliness, appearance of work; participation; preparedness; behavior; and following directions.

Practice:

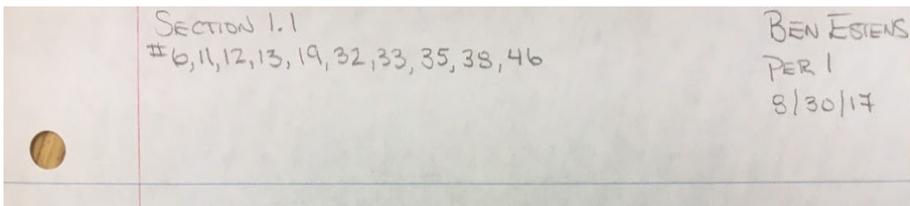
Practice, which will focus on the topics covered in class, should be expected Monday through Thursday.

Practice should always be done in pencil on a separate sheet of lined or graphing paper, and it should always include the proper heading in the top right corner of the paper, including: name, class period, and date. In the top left corner, include textbook section or title of assignment, and the required questions.

(example headings)



OR



Practice should always be completed in the best possible handwriting, and each question should be organized in the following way:

1. Copy the question out of the book or off the worksheet
2. Show steps as to how you solved the problem
3. Answer the question in the language it was asked in, and put a box around the answer.

Practice will be worth 10 points, broken down in the following way:

Effort: Four points Checking & Discussing: Two points Timeliness: One Point
Presentation: Two points Heading: One Point

Effort – To receive 4 points, all questions need to be genuinely attempted, and ALL WORK MUST BE SHOWN.

Presentation – To receive a 2, homework must be presented in students' best handwriting (IN PENCIL ONLY). Students need to make use of the lines on the paper. Paper must be free from overwhelming wrinkles, tears, and spiral ripped edges. Three holes, if they existed to begin with, must remain intact.

Checking & Discussing – Students will be given an opportunity at the beginning of class to check their work from the previous night, and talk with their table groups about any questions or struggles they had.

Heading – To receive a 1, homework must include: Name, Date, Period, Assignment Name, and Question Numbers in their proper locations.

Timeliness – Homework is due at the beginning of class one school day after the day that it was assigned unless otherwise stated.

Of course, there are exceptions for students who are ill, absent, or as needed on a case-by-case basis.

Textbook:

Students will be issued a copy of Big Ideas Math: Modeling Real Life – Grade 8. Because the books are relatively new, and we do want to try to keep them in as good a condition as possible, fines may be issued for any damage to the books. Fines may also be issued for books that are not returned, or returned in such poor condition as to necessitate their retirement.

Teacher Webpage:

Our class website can be found either by going to the faculty page on the Ashbrook Independent School website and clicking the website link beside my name, or by going to: MrWilson.live

On our website, which I update daily, you can find course information, access to a digital copy of the textbook, a weekly calendar, notes taken in class, homework assignments, extra practice, solutions to practice questions, and much more. I would encourage you to bookmark it so you know exactly what is going on in class on any given day. For the pages that require passwords, the password is always, “ashbrook”.

Classroom Procedures:

Students are expected to enter the room quietly. Class will begin with students checking their practice from the day before (if any was assigned), and discussing any questions they had with their table groups. Practice will then be turned in. Students will be given a chance to copy the planner for the week on the first day of class for the week (typically Monday). From there, I will post the warm up on the board. Students are expected to try it on their own first, but they may work with their groups.

After we work out the warm up on the board together, the new material will be presented. Students are expected to take notes in their Math 8 binders during this time. It is very important that good notes are taken so that students will have strong examples to learn from. At the end of the week, students will be given a quiz to gauge their proficiency with the material.

Finally, students will be dismissed when the classroom is returned to the order they found it in, and they are all quietly sitting in their seats.

Extra Credit:

At the college level, mathematics departments are seeing a strange issue occur. Students are entering college after having passed advanced mathematics courses at the high school level, but upon taking mathematics placement tests, they are being placed in math classes far lower than they should be placed in according to the high school course they have most recently passed. A big part of the problem is the artificial grade inflation that occurs at the high school and middle school levels because of non-content related extra credit. In an effort to avoid artificial grade inflation, there will be no extra credit in this course.

Make-Up Work:

Although work in the effort category cannot be fixed or redone once a score has been earned, work in the academic category can. Tests and quizzes that receive a 70% or lower can be made up to potentially earn a higher score. After showing evidence that the concepts are understood, the student will get one opportunity to make up any given test or quiz and the higher of the two scores will be used. One make-up assignment is allowed per week.

Absences:

Because the pace of the class is based on the performance of the students with the content, it can be difficult to accurately predict where we are going to be with the material, even on a weekly basis. This has the potential to make pre-arranged absences (especially if they are extended beyond 1 or 2 days) difficult to gather work for. Upon return, students will be given the same number of days they missed to get the work turned in for full credit. With the technology that we have access to these days, I will always encourage students to try their best to keep up with the class (notes and homework) whenever possible. On our class website, I have lecture videos made for every lesson, and blank notes that can be printed out at home, so it is possible for students to stay completely caught up during an absence, provided they're feeling well enough, of course. 😊

