

The Top 10 List for Being Successful in Accelerated 6th Grade Math

1. **Visit the Mangham Math website frequently.** ManghamMath.com

Almost every assignment can be downloaded, the weekly homework is listed, and many other updates are posted throughout the school year. There are many links to Khan Academy, which has excellent videos covering many of our topics.

Also this year we have Edmodo.com where students can ask questions to both me and to the rest of the class 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

2. **Help your child plan in advance and take advantage of help that is offered.**

99% of all assignments are given in advance. Reviews for the next test are copied and available the day of the previous test (meaning at least a week in advance). Late work can have a major effect on a student's overall grade. Extra assistance is available every morning starting at 8:00am. Your child is welcome once a month, once a week, or every single day. Your student has a hall pass valid for the entire year to come to my room. The smartest students take advantage of this time.

3. **Complete reviews early and learn how to study.**

All reviews are due the day of the test, but if a student finishes early he or she can check all their answers with the answer key on Edmodo. That gives them time to see what problems gave them difficulty and to ask questions before the test. One of the key goals for this class is teaching your student how to study. Some students in this class have rarely actually had to study to do well in school up to this point. Almost everything we do this year will be new to the majority of students. We talk about "how to study" in class to help your student prepare. Part of your student learning how to study is to ask parents/older siblings/friends for help – not just the answer, but help in how to go about solving the problem.

4. **Remember that this class was designed to challenge your gifted math student.**

We will cover the entire middle school curriculum as the class was designed to prepare students for Algebra in 7th grade. As a parent, you have your child in this class because they will learn so much more math than in compacted math. [I talk about this class as being the equivalent of a select sports team. It is fast-paced, more difficult, expectations are higher, and you might no longer be the "star" player. If you have the ability to be on the select team though, you learn a great deal more, become much better at your sport, and are much better prepared for future competitions.]

5. **High stress students vs. high stress parents**

I don't know all families well enough yet to know if you have to keep your student focused on his/her academics or if your student stresses out at the first sign of an 89. Just a reminder throughout the year: I want your student to learn. You want your student to learn. Sometimes the grade reflects the learning and sometimes it doesn't. However if the grade was the only thing that was important your student would be in compacted mathematics.

6. ***When to become concerned and what happens in seventh grade***

When your student has an average below an 80, we seriously begin to look at ways to help them improve their grades. If a student continues to struggle, dropping back to compacted math is an option up until the end of the first semester. In 7th grade there are three math levels: 7th grade math, pre-Algebra, and Algebra. From accelerated math usually about 65-70% of students will qualify for Algebra and 50% of students actually enroll in Algebra.

7. ***Resources for help at home and our color coordination***

There are always problems in their chapter packet that we do not have time to complete. The online math book (coming soon) is a great resource at home in addition to my website. When a student is confused about a concept ask them to look at their notes in their math spiral, their current chapter packet, and/or their math book. At least one of these resources will have examples to help them. If you are looking for something from class all **reviews are green** and all **tests are blue**.

8. ***I remember that they are still only in 6th grade.***

This class is **NOT** taught the same way similar middle school classes may be taught. We use many manipulatives, have hands-on lessons, and utilize technology. I remember that your students are only in 6th grade: they need breaks, they need real-world applications, and they don't need me lecturing to them for 90 minutes each day! They can learn just as much from the other students in the class as they can from me.

9. ***Assignment expectations***

Use a pencil and show all your work on a piece of notebook paper. I do not collect HW early so you can always ask your student to show you their HW at night. Students copy all assignments for the week in their assignment spirals on Monday.

10. ***Yes, we also like to have fun!***

I know I ask a lot of each of my students so we try to have fun in class as much as possible in addition to the work. Each day I start with a handshake at the door and music from my iPod. We have Mangham's Most Wanted and our weekly Friday video. For a stretch break in the middle of class we play Survivor. We do lots of group activities (Architecture project), games (Survivor), contests (Fantasy Football), and have rewards (Mangham's Most Wanted to spin our Wheel-o-Fortune).

My goal at the end of the school year: To have your student say, "Mr. Mangham is the toughest math teacher I have ever had and I wouldn't have wanted to be in any other math class but his."

Distribution of grades

Many parents are not exactly sure how to interpret their student's grade in math class since we are covering all of 7th and all of 8th grade material. A large percentage of my students have straight As in all of their other classes. I don't grade on any type of curve so each year grades can fluctuate. That said, the list below shows typical final averages for my students. Remember these are all of the top math students in their entire district.

40% 90 or higher 40% 85-89 20% 80-84