

Lance Mangham

6th Grade Accelerated Math

2017-2018 School Year

Curriculum Night

Six Things I Want You To Know About My Class

1. I want to be here.
2. I want my students to be here.
3. I am excited about this school year.
4. I am enthusiastic and optimistic about the opportunities my students will have.
5. Each of my students is important.
6. I am here to help the students – all of them.

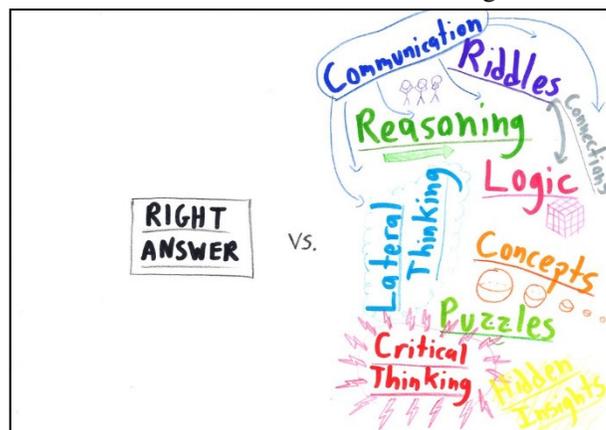
The Answer vs. The Process

Taken from “Mad With Bad Drawings” website

What is important in math?

The most common answer I get from students is “the right answer”.

Sometimes that is true, but not all the time. There needs to be a balance between getting the answers and the process used to get the answers.



In this class there are times when they will be graded on the **process** and times when they will be graded on the **answer**.

Times when the process is more important

- **Homework and classwork** covering new material

Here I will usually emphasize the process. Showing work shows me the process they used. Their grade could be up to 100% based on the work (process) they show to solve their questions.

Times when the process and the answers are balanced

- **Quizzes, mini-projects** over material we have covered for a few days

Often on these types of assignments both answers and process will count as part of the grade.

Times when answers are more important

- **Tests, projects** at the end of an entire unit to show mastery

Tests and final projects will emphasize the correct answers because they have now had numerous opportunities to practice the process. By this point in time they should know the process well enough to be able to get correct answers.

Showing work is important so that both the student can understand and I can understand thought processes. I don't ask them to show their work to make my students spend more time on homework and classwork. The work shown could count anywhere from 0% to 100% of a grade.

What all students need for their future is as much about how they think as about what they know.

Sixth Grade Accelerated Math

I know I won't be able to convince everyone, but in my opinion this year will be less stressful on your student and more meaningful all around if we....

Focus on the learning, not the grade.

If the grade is the most important thing, I can guarantee all accelerated math students would get a higher grade if they moved to compacted or on-level math. I want students who are working hard, learning how to study and practice math skills, and giving their best. A student who does those things and ends the class with an 85 leaves the class with just as much as a student who ends with a 95.

- The grade has no effect on their future job.
- The grade has no effect on which college they will go to.
- The grade has no effect on their high school GPA.
- The grade has very little effect on math placement next year (80% of the matrix criteria is standardized test scores.)

This is the year to challenge even the most gifted math students. We are asking them to learn the entire middle school curriculum before they get to middle school. If they learn everything isn't easy in school and at times it is a bit of a struggle to get through, this is the perfect place to learn before it does start to count.

I care that your student stays above an 80 average. I want your student to do their best. If I were teaching him or her sixth grade math, your student would have a 99 average and learn nothing. Don't get confused on the report card that the grade signifies how much he or she has actually learned.

What do you think a teacher thinks every time a student asks, "Is this going to be for a grade?"

"Pupils show greater motivation, are better behaved and are more likely to be independent and strategic thinkers when teachers are not obsessed by grades."

Chris Watkins, Institute of Education, August 2010

From an analysis of 100 international studies of how children learn

Student Success: Focus on Learning, not Grades

<http://myblueprintstory.com/student-success-focus-on-learning-not-grades/>

Focus on learning, not on grades. I drive home this point with any individual or group I meet with to talk about academic success: Whether on tests, papers, homework, or projects, I practically beg students to exert their effort on the learning process and to let go of any fixation on grades. A funny thing happens for those who invest in learning – they generally end up with good grades from the course.

As a parent, do your best to frame conversations around learning, not around grades. Telling your child to spend more time studying isn't likely to be very productive; asking what your student is learning, or what they find interesting in a class, is likely to be more fruitful. As you interact with your son or daughter, encourage them to focus on learning and to take advantage of resources on campus – not just to get by, but to thrive as a learner.

What You Can Do To Help Your Child With Math Homework This Year

(Some idea taken from Math Homework That Counts, Annette Raphael)

Option #1: You will have an admirer for life if you let teachers know you plan to implement something along these lines during a school year:

"I'd like to give my child some increased autonomy this year, so I won't be meddling in his homework and I'd like for you to hold him accountable for the consequences of his mistakes."

Option #2: If the first option seems completely unreasonable this year, then here are some suggestions when looking over homework with your student.

1. Never, ever pick up a pencil. Talk the problem through with your student, but don't do any writing for him or her.
2. Make your student verbally explain what he or she does understand and where he or she is getting stuck.
3. Help your child relax by putting homework in perspective.
4. Talk about rules and procedures for doing homework right away (pencil, showing all work, etc.).
5. Identify a good place to do homework.
6. Model how to handle frustration by being calm and reasonable and by helping your child see that strategies and problem solving are as valuable in real life as they are in math class.
7. Help your child refocus when he or she becomes distracted.
8. Allow your child autonomy in figuring out when and in what order to do assignments.
9. Motivate by praising, reassuring, challenging, personalizing, or editorializing.
10. Figure out when and if taking a break is a good idea.
11. Have your child write a note to the teacher if there is something that should be shared about the way homework is going.
12. Don't let homework interfere with your relationship with your child. This is not meant to be a confrontational experience.

If there's an issue that needs to be raised with a teacher, teach your student how to raise the concern on their own. Teachers are very impressed when students are able to raise their own concerns.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW – 6th Grade Accelerated Math

ManghamMath.com is your source for everything related to our class.

Each grading period we have...

- 3 tests
- Sometimes a major project (spring semester)
- Around 7 quizzes (we drop the lowest each grading period)
- 3-5 other daily grades

CHAPTER PACKETS

- Distributed in class
- Available at ManghamMath.com
- We complete some pages in class, some for homework, and some are extra
- We will use our math book for one chapter in January
- First source of material for the class
- Students also take class notes covering each given topic

HOMEWORK

- There is homework every night.
- Most homework assignments should take 20-30 minutes (reviews are longer).
- Most homework assignments are checked off as completed, not entered as a grade.
- This is your student's first try at new material.
- It is okay to struggle or have questions or wrong answers.
- It is not okay not to try.
- Help is available:
 - On Edmodo 24 hours a day from Mr. Mangham and fellow students
 - Between 8:00 and 8:30 every morning
 - During homeroom each school day

IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW – 6th Grade Accelerated Math

REVIEWS

- All 12 for the entire year are available now
- Hard copies available in class (green paper)
- Available at ManghamMath.com
- **Require your student to complete the review before getting help or looking at the answer key.**
- **This is the best way to simulate the test.**
- Answer key posted at ManghamMath.com
- Due on test day
- Not a graded grade, check for completion

TESTS

- On blue paper
- Very similar to the review, but shorter
- **Students can delete 2 questions on each test**
- **Due at the end of class**
- **Students may exchange their 2 deletes for 20 extra minutes**
- Returned the following school day and we go over the most missed

PROJECTS

- Fantasy Football (September – December)
- Stock Market Challenge (October – May)
- Food & Restaurants (November – December)
- Barbie Bungee Jump (January)
- Battle of the Number 1 Hits (February)
- Architecture and Design (February – March)
- The Hunger Games (April)
- Skin & Guts: Design Your Own Animal Species (May)

The List for Being Successful in Accelerated 6th Grade Math

1. *Visit the ManghamMath website frequently.* ManghamMath.com
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 whole year are already on the website. Late work can have a major effect on a student's overall grade. The smartest students take advantage of the 8:00-8:30 tutoring time to ask questions.
3. *Complete reviews early and learn how to study.*
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.*
As a parent, you have your child in this class because they will learn so much more math than in compacted math. This class is like a select sports team: it requires more work and your child won't necessarily be the superstar, but he or she will be very well-prepared for the future.
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. 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 or if your student now "hates" math, it is time to become a bit concerned. If a student continues to struggle, dropping back to compacted math is an option.
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. 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.
8. *I remember that they are still only in 6th grade.*
We use many manipulatives, have hands-on lessons, and utilize technology. 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.

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

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.

10% 95 or higher 30% 90-94 40% 85-89 20% 80-84