

Why do Students Struggle with Math?

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If students think they are struggling in math but don't know if they are, they should think of these. Students may feel embarrassed to ask a question in front of the class about not knowing what to do. They also might feel like the teacher is speaking another language. Math is presented to us as a difficult subject that requires a lot of knowledge in order to be successful, but it is not the case for everyone but a lot of people. Some students just need that extra help one to one or in small groups so they can succeed in the classroom. It has been shown that when students get the right intervention within the classroom they can improve their grades. Middle school math is working on developing and building upon the skills for elementary school. If they struggled in elementary school, the likelihood is that they will continue to struggle in middle school. How do school students struggle with math and what is being done to help them overcome their obstacles?

There are many reasons why middle school students struggle with math, some of these reasons being that they don't know the language and the organization of the math steps. Some things that middle schoolers can have struggles with are, "have difficulty with the vocabulary of math, have trouble learning or recalling abstract terms, or have difficulty reading texts to direct their own learning," (Public Broadcasting Service, n.d.). These are explanations of things that a student can be struggling with using the language of math. Some other things that students can be struggling with are, "have difficulties sequencing multiple steps, be unable to appreciate the appropriateness or reasonableness of solutions generated, or lose appreciation of the final goal and over emphasize individual elements of a problem," (Public Broadcasting Service, n.d.). These are what students can struggle with over organization within the math process. An example of this is, there was a kid that had to find a number in a table. The kid had trouble not knowing to use multiplication or division. After the kid was able to figure out how to use

division and then had trouble with a simple division problem. After the kid was able to figure out that, then the kid did not know what to do with that number. The kid was able to then use that number to multi and then was able to get the answer. The problem was hard for the kid and it took a long time. The math process is complicated, but there are strategies to help students overcome these obstacles.

In order for students to be successful in the mathematics classroom, they need strategies to help them better understand the materials. “Some kids just need more time and practice to learn math skills, or better instruction. Others need additional support to get there. The type of support kids need often depends on what’s causing the challenge. In fact, kids who have trouble with math are often trying their best,” (Lee, 2021). There are different ways to help students, and if something works for one person it would not work for someone else. People learn in all different ways and with different techniques. “Focus lessons on specific concepts/skills that are standards-based. Differentiate instruction through flexible grouping, individualizing lessons, compacting, using tiered assignments, and varying question levels,” (The effective mathematics, n.d.). It is important to know how to help a student who is having trouble achieving their goals so they can excel in their work. There are different ways to help a student to be successful, but not all of the ways are going to work for some students.

In conclusion, students can and will struggle with math and all the parts in it. Students struggle with math and what type of help is going to them to overcome their obstacles. My capstone project is tutoring 6th graders with their math. I am trying to help out some students with their math and to build up their math skills.

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