EDNA BREWER 7TH GRADE MATH UPDATE

November 2013

CECIL THE TIGHTROPE WALKER

Our 7th graders have been working with Cecil the Tightrope Walker as they brave their way through integers (whole positive and negative numbers, including 0). Cecil has helped them move forwards and backwards across a number line where they discovered (or rediscovered) that a negative sign means he's walking backwards and a positive sign meant he was moving forwards on the line.

WELCOME TO COMMON CORE MATH!

Throughout this year your student will not only be learning traditional math concepts to ready them for Algebra and a college track, but will also be learning to construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of their classmates while revising their own thinking through individual work, gamification, partner work and group work. A lot of the focus is on *how* the student gets to the answer, justifying and revising thinking and being able to express mathematical thinking through speaking and writing.

We are all VERY excited as we work to develop fantastic mathematical thinkers!

Current Learning Objectives…

Over the month students will be working with integers and rational numbers to explore different methods for writing expressions and solving equations.

Q: How can I support my student with integers and rational numbers?
A: Asking to see your student's notes and/or work from the day and asking them to verbalize what was investigated or discussed in class will support your student's thinking and growth. Dig deep when asking questions! Use the question "Why" a lot!

Q: How can I support the use of rational numbers and integers in everyday life?
A: Cooking? Grocery shopping? Cleaning the house? Talk about these things in terms of fractions. "If you clean your room and the bathroom, what fraction of the house have you cleaned?" (If there are 3 rooms in your house and your student has cleaned two of those rooms, they will have cleaned 2/3 of the house!) When talking about integers, this cold weather is perfect to start discussions about the temperature falling (negative numbers) and rising (positive numbers). If you're doing any traveling over the holidays talk about above (positive) and below (negative) the sea line!

A: Help your student create a budget over the next month to explain why debt matters and what it means to live "within your means". Not only a great life skill but fits perfectly with the explanation of positive and negative numbers.

"Do not worry about your difficulties with mathematics. I can assure you mine are still greater." –Albert Einstein

UNIT 2 BEGINS

In Chapter 2-3 (Unit 2) students are working to deepen their understanding of various types of numbers. We will be looking carefully at the relationships between fractions, decimals and percents and look at grouping mathematical operations to simplify expressions accurately. An important piece of this unit will be investigating how to figure out unknown amounts, a skill that is essential to algebraic thinking.

WHY ARE INTEGERS AND RATIONAL NUMBERS IMPORTANT?

Integers and rational numbers help explain money! Aside from the fact that a large portion of number theory is based on the manipulation of integers and rational numbers, they are both integral in understanding money. A strong grasp and the ability to manipulate both will make budgeting a snap which is a great life skill. Rational numbers and integers are also key to Algebra and the ability to create expressions, equations and graphs.

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