

Syllabus

Junior High Math: Pre-Algebra

Heritage Academy
A University-Model School®
Instructor: Mrs. Melissa Watson

I. Course Purpose and Content

This course bridges arithmetic to the abstract concepts of Algebra. Topics such as fractions, mixed numbers, decimals, and operations with real numbers will be continued while the beginning concepts of Algebra will be introduced. These will include variables and expressions, equations and inequalities, operations with integers, and functions and graphing.

II. Worldview Integration

Heritage Academy is committed to teaching all subjects in such a way that students develop a biblical worldview out of which to think and act. In seeking to understand the nature of the world around us (external reality), an essential truth of Scripture is that God created all things and sustains all things, and the wisdom of his creative and sustaining ways can often be seen in the order and elegance of mathematics. It follows then, that we, as people made in God's image, may also utilize his created system of mathematics to ourselves be creative and exercise dominion within our spheres of influence.

"Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance?" (Isaiah 40:12).

"When he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I [wisdom] was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man" (Proverbs 8:29b-31).

III. Required Texts/Materials

Pre-Algebra [ISBN: 9780078651082; Glencoe/McGraw-Hill Publishers, 2005]

- A system (folder or binder) for keeping assignments sheets, handouts, notes, and completed homework in
- A simple calculator that includes a square root button
- Lined paper and graph paper
- Two thin, black dry-erase markers (Expo brand is recommended)
- Dry-erase eraser (an old sock or wash cloth will do)
- Compass, Ruler, and Protractor – the student will keep these at home until instructed to bring to class

IV. Course Guidelines/Student Responsibilities

A. Attendance

Attendance is imperative as concepts cannot be learned if a student is absent. Students are expected to attend class and contribute positively to the classroom environment.

Tardiness is disruptive to other class members. Please arrive on time and prepared. All absences and tardies are considered unexcused unless accompanied by a note from a parent or guardian. Please remember that three tardies generate one absence.

As communicated in Heritage Academy's Family Manual, a passing grade awarded at the end of the semester generally requires that a secondary student has attended at least forty-two class periods during the semester. Failure to meet this minimum attendance requirement may result in an F being awarded and recorded on the student's transcript.

B. Absences and Late Work

In the case of planned absence(s), homework that is due during the student's absence must be completed and submitted to the instructor in advance.

When a student is unexpectedly and unavoidably absent due to ill health, past-due assignments must be submitted within two course periods after the student's return to school. **When an unexpected absence must occur, please be sure to notify the school office and the instructor of the students' absence as quickly as possible, preferably before the involved class occurs. This contact may occur by phone or by email.**

Late work that is submitted simply "late" will be graded and penalized with a **ten percent grade reduction for each course period that it is late**; homework will not be accepted more than three course periods (1 week) past its due date, unless previous arrangements between the teacher and the student's parent have been agreed to in light of peculiar circumstances that are occurring beyond the family's control.

C. Student Conduct and Preparation for Learning

So that a classroom environment conducive for safety, focus, and learning may be maintained, each student is expected to conduct himself/herself in keeping with the following guidelines throughout the course of the semester:

- 1) Arrive on time to each class period with the appropriate class materials available for access (e.g., organized notebook with dividers and filed materials, paper, writing tools, texts, and other tools as directed)
- 2) Arrive prepared to submit completed at-home assignments at start of each class period.
- 3) Arrive ready to listen, learn, take notes, and participate in teacher-directed classroom discussions and activities. (**Note:** Active participation in class will reap the rewards of quicker comprehension and a greater depth of understanding for the student. **Students may be asked to take notes or copy down examples** to aid them when they are working independently at home. Students should ask questions as soon as the need occurs to be sure they stay on track and don't get lost in the middle of a procedure. An added benefit of class participation is that it helps to keep the class from being boring!)
- 4) Ask for clarification or further explanation when a concept or direction remains unclear.
- 5) Demonstrate a spirit of cooperation, kindness, and respect toward the teacher and fellow classmates in keeping with Heritage Academy's Code of Conduct.
- 6) Help keep the classroom area clean and orderly.
- 7) Cooperate with the parent-educator and the Heritage Academy teacher to complete homework in a timely fashion.
- 8) Communicate concerns regarding schoolwork to both the Heritage Academy teacher and the parent-educator, so that these concerns can be addressed quickly.
- 9) On the whole, conduct himself or herself in a manner that is worthy of Christ and reflects the life of the Holy Spirit in him/her: ". . . that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light" (Colossians 1:12).

D. At-Home (Satellite Classroom) Investment

Homework is an essential component of any mathematics course. Consistent review of concepts and working of problems is essential for achievement of success and understanding. Home communication sheets will be given to students by chapters, therefore each communication sheet will cover 2 to 3 weeks of assignments. Student can expect to invest 2.5 to 4 hours each week in completion of at-home assignments.

On regular assignments, approximately five problems per assignment will be selected for grading. Partial credit may be given for completed but incorrect work.

Course assignments may include any of the following:

- **Review** of concepts and/or terms through study of notes or examples in the text.
- **Completion of math problems.**
- **Memorization:** formulas, definitions, scripture verses.
- **Maintenance of a Course Binder**
- **Preparation for Tests:** Students may be instructed to review notes, various texts, previously completed tests, scripture verses and/or to complete review questions and practice problem etc, in preparation for tests.
- **Dialog:** Students may be instructed to discuss and/or explore certain topics or concepts with a parent. These assignments will be given purposefully and should not be dismissed.
- Referencing Heritage Academy’s “Parent/Student Guidance for At-Home Math Assignments” which is attached to the end of this syllabus and important to reference if a “wall” is encountered on at-home days.
- **Other Assignments:** additional types of assignments may given throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor.

NOTE: Work must be shown for every problem where it is required. Papers should **be neat and legible.** Pencil is preferred, but blue or black erasable ink is also allowed. Please use standard size 8 ½ by 11 notebook paper. A few problems from each assignment will be selected to be graded.

E. Assessments

Six to seven chapter tests will be given throughout the course of the semester. A comprehensive, semester exam will be given at the end of each semester, in keeping with Heritage Academy’s Final Exam schedule.

F. Grades

| Grade Apportionment | | Grading Scale | |
|------------------------------|-----|----------------------|-------------------|
| Daily Assignments / Projects | 20% | 100-95.... A | 79-77..... C+ |
| Tests | 65% | 94-90 A- | 76-73..... C |
| Semester Final | 15% | 89-87 B+ | 72-70..... C- |
| | | 86-83 B | 69-60..... D |
| | | 82-80..... B- | 59 or belowF |

The semester grade that the student has earned by the end of each semester will be the semester grade that appears on the student’s transcript. This course is a junior-high-level course and will not generate high school credit. To maintain eligibility for promotion to the next course in Heritage Academy’s Math sequence, the student must achieve a percentage grade of 70% or above (which translate to a letter grade of C- or above) and fulfill attendance requirements.

V. Parent Responsibilities

A. Embracing the University Model®

University-Model Schooling at Heritage Academy is driven by two guiding principles:

- to preserve and strengthen God-ordained family relationships;
- to offer students the opportunity to achieve a high degree of academic excellence.

Heritage Academy operates as a University-Model School®, designed for families who want their students to flourish from a life anchored in the home yet still gain from the best aspects of traditional, classroom education. Courses offered at Heritage Academy occur every-other-day so that students may realize the benefits of qualified teachers and a focused learning community, yet continue to experience home as the primary, consistent base where parents remain their foremost guides for spiritual, social, academic, and character formation.

Parents, please consider ways you may maximize the benefits University-Model Schooling offers to your family. How can you as parents utilize the at-home study time this model provides to nurture deeper relationship and impart the faith, values, and life-patterns you desire your student to embrace?

B. Fulfilling the Parent Role

Within the University-Model School[®], **parents commit to fulfill a specified role related to each course** in which their student is enrolled, as prescribed by the course's description. Each role identifies specific responsibilities that the teacher relies on the parent to perform, thus facilitating effective home/school partnership whereby students are assured of receiving needed support. For this course, Heritage Academy has designated parents the role of **"Guide for Dependent Study."**

This role recognizes that many courses at this level will begin to cover subject matter that may be unfamiliar to many parents. At the same time, the student is at a dependent age where disciplined study habits must be developed, not by parental force, but through positive encouragement and through the student's growing awareness of personal consequences. In order for this class to be successful, I as a teacher am depending upon you as parents to ensure that your son or daughter keeps up with the course material and to communicate with me should any difficulties or concerns arise.

For this course specifically, please be sure to review the attached document titled "Parent/Student Guidance for At-Home Assignments." The steps laid out in this document are important for students and parents to keep in mind when the student is experiencing difficulty with a problem or concept at home or is desiring to prepare for tests as strategically as possible.

C. Monitoring Engrade

As your student earns grades for completed tests, quizzes, and various projects and homework assignments, these will be recorded in **Engrade.com** for you to view at your convenience. My general goal will be to post grades online within a week of their being awarded.

In Engrade, missing assignments will also be noted by an "M." Please take time to follow your student's progress on Engrade so that you can quickly recognize and explore/address areas of patterns of difficulty or concern that may appear and affirm positive accomplishments.

Directions to register for Engrade are accessible on Heritage Academy's website under "Resources" and "Engrade", or may also be received from the office. If you need aid setting up Engrade (it should only take about two minutes), please contact Heritage Academy's office.

D. Parent/Teacher Fellowship

I hope you will take time to come to Parent/Teacher Fellowship scheduled during the 7th week of each semester. This will give you and I brief opportunity to connect face-to-face and discuss your student's progress, making the most of the partnership that is so vital to students' success within the University Model[®].

V. Contacting the Instructor

On the first day of the semester, each student enrolled in this course will receive a hard copy of this syllabus, which will include the instructor's personal contact information.

Heritage Academy Math

Student/Parent Guidance for At-Home Assignments

Dear Heritage Academy Parents and Students,

Please review the steps below that will be important for math students to remember when they encounter difficulties with homework or are preparing for tests.

I. Homework

- A. Create a plan for completing the assignments and work extra problems if needed.
- B. If you are having trouble working a problem, please take the following steps in the following order:
 - 1. Use the “Homework Help” chart provided in the chapter to be guide back to *example problems* that will help you review steps for problem solving;
 - 2. Ask a parent for help;
 - 3. Use the Glencoe online study tools specific to your textbook;
 - 4. After taking the steps above, contact your classroom teacher for help.
- C. Check every answer for accuracy by comparing them to the answers listed in the back of your book. Rework any problem that is incorrect, showing your work.

II. Exams

- A. Review flashcards, notes, and textbook example problems.
- B. Review topics covered and determine which were easy/difficult to understand.
- C. For difficult topics
 - Rework homework problems
 - Work additional problems for extra practice
 - Pursue additional review with online resources
- D. Work the textbook’s Practice Test.

Please detach the section below and return to your teacher. To the student: file the upper portion of this sheet in your binder so that you may reference it as necessary.

We have reviewed and discussed the above HA Math Standards and agree to partner with the teacher by letting this procedures guide our at-home investment.

_____ (student’s signature)

_____ (parent’s signature)

Please return to school by the second day that this course meets.