

1

When setting up your gradebook, instead of starting student names on the first line, leave a few rows blank so that you have space under the assignment heading for things like possible number of points, date, type of assignment, etc.

2

Give students a notebook grade. You can just do a quick quarterly check to make sure they have taken notes during each lesson. Instead of collecting the notebooks, just walk around to each desk and check quarterly while students are taking a test.

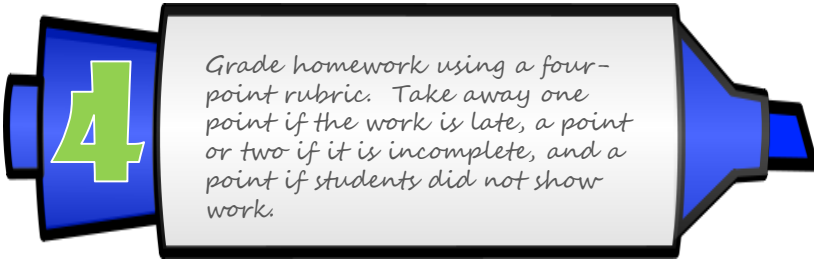
Tips and Tricks for Your Math Classroom

for middle and high school math teachers

Start each class period with a warm-up. It can be a critical thinking problem, review questions, or even a quick quiz. Get students in the habit of starting right away when they enter. During this time, you can complete attendance and check homework.

3

When a student is absent for a test or quiz, immediately write their name on their test and put it on a clipboard. Having them ready to go on the podium or chalk ledge serves as a reminder to you to have them take the test, and when the student returns, the test is ready to be taken to the hall to be made up without having to move desks in and out unless they prefer a desk (most kids love to just sit on the floor in a carpeted hallway to relax and take their test).



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Grade homework using a four-point rubric. Take away one point if the work is late, a point or two if it is incomplete, and a point if students did not show work.

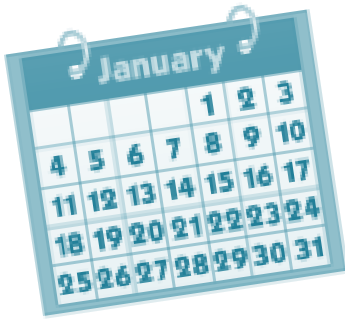
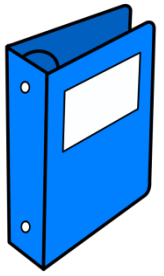
5

Be willing to allow students to redo work so they are motivated to go back and get the practice they need. If they originally earned 2 out of 4 points because they only did half of the homework and did not show their work, they can redo it to earn a 3 out of 4 (not a perfect score, because by that point it is like a "late" 3 out of 4)

6



Learn names by having a seating chart on your podium/desk always in view. Call on students in order going through the rows multiple times the first few days. Ask them to supply their homework answers and then use their names for any discipline reminders, etc. They will be very surprised that you know their name on the first day and will quickly realize they cannot get away with anything, especially if they are not aware that you have the seating chart in front of you.



8

Set up a calendar for each class in the back of the classroom. Write homework daily. Absent students can come back and check what they missed.

Keep your seating chart available every day, even once you know names. Use it to quickly identify absent students.

Tuck notes to yourself, papers to hand back, and messages to students in front of the chart for that class period so as you flip to the next seating chart to begin class, you see all your reminders and papers to hand back for that period.

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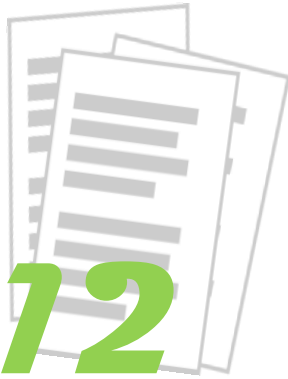
Set up trays in the back of the room for each class to place late and make-up work instead of handing it to you.

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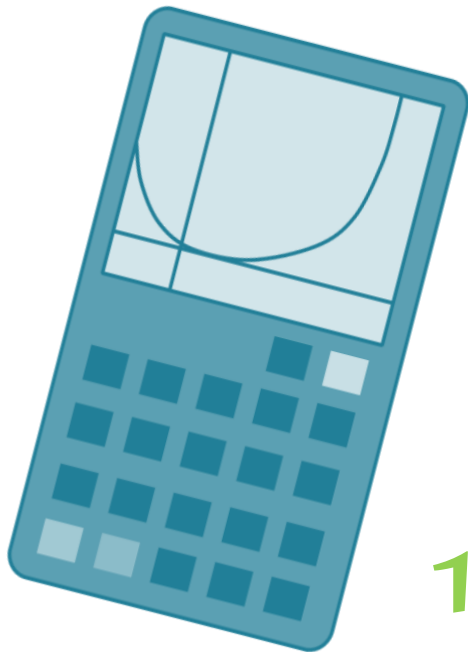
Offer optional test corrections. This motivates students to go back and acquire the understanding they were still missing during an assessment instead of giving up and moving on. Give them one week to do this and turn it in after receiving their graded test. They may get help if needed, but must write in complete sentences what they did wrong the first time and explain the problem to show that they understand the concept now. They must also redo all work. Offer half credit back for each test question that is redone and explained in this format. This method puts accountability on the students.

When distributing worksheets, grab one for each absent student. Write their name on it so everything is ready to just hand to them when they return – no hunting for blank worksheets from each day.



When a student is absent, draw a box around (or highlight) the corresponding day for their name in the gradebook.

13



In addition to a score in the gradebook, add tiny footnotes next to the number. You can use things like “L” for late, “I” for incomplete, “R” for when a student is supposed to redo an assignment, “M” for missing, and any other helpful reminders. Some computerized gradebooks allow footnotes as well. If your gradebook has plenty of room, you can even double space the names for a full row for these coded notes.

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To save paper, any time you are doing a single sided worksheet, cut it between two rows of problems and make double sided half sheets.

When creating math worksheets, quizzes, tests, and other materials, use tables (visible or borderless) to keep pieces of problems where you want them. This is much easier than using columns and keeps everything numbered correctly with diagrams, equations, and figures in place and provides spaces for answers.

16

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Look into teaching math through inquiry. Students really benefit from discovery learning. Check it out at mathgiraffe.com or visit the [Math Giraffe store at TpT](#).

