Hanlon's Razor

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What works is work!

Student Suggestions

Increasing Student Achievement

1. Neatly copy in your notebook any problems that are put on board. Be sure you understand each step of the problem as it is being explained. Ask questions to clarify any step that you do not understand. Do not wait to have the point explained at a later time. Notebooks should contain vocabulary, notation, conceptual and pattern development, and explanations to clarify what is being learned, as well as problems.

2. Always try to do as much of the assignment as possible without help. To a great extent, the amount you learn is dependent upon how well you have worked independently. When you practice a skill, it is more likely to become part of your long-term memory. Relying excessively on the teacher, or anyone else, to answer questions and to solve all the problems could result in a lack of understanding. If you are still confused after making your best effort, consider discussing the problem with a classmate.

3. It is necessary to spend time studying at home in order to reinforce what you have learned in class. Do not think that once you have obtained all the answers on an assignment, you are through with the material. After completing an assignment, review the concepts with the idea that you will be expected to know the material on a test. By studying at home, you will discover what you do not understand and will be ready to ask questions in class the next day. A student who has done little studying on his own frequently knows so little that he is embarrassed to reveal his ignorance. He is often afraid to ask a question that he feels everyone else in class can already answer.

4. When material you have already learned is being discussed, use the opportunity for "over-learning." Try to work a step ahead of the person presenting the problem.

5. DO NOT WASTE TIME IN CLASS! Most of your learning will occur during class time; it is foolish to waste this time. Each class period gives you an opportunity to concentrate on learning a specific concept, to correct your mistakes, and to direct your learning efforts.

6. ALWAYS COME TO CLASS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE! When you are absent, there is no way to fully make-up for the class instruction you miss.

7. Always seek to understand rather than simply to "squeak by." The grade you receive is important, but not nearly as important as the mental growth you gain from the process of learning the subject.

8. Memorization will help you absorb and retain factual information upon which understanding and critical thought is based. Knowing and using mathematical vocabulary and notation is key to the understanding of the mathematical sciences.

9. PREPARE FOR TESTS! Your tests are often made up of questions that come directly from homework exercises, class notes, the chapter test or the chapter review. Meet in study groups to discuss items that you think will be on the test. Use the study group for remediation and peer tutoring. Individuals that help others also learn as well as gain a better understanding of the material themselves.

10. Use the long-term reviews at the end of a class period to solidify your knowledge and understanding of previously learned concepts and skills. Those topics will appear on high-stakes tests such as the ACT/SAT and high school proficiency exams.

11. If you are making a serious effort and still not doing well, come in before or after school and talk with the teacher. The teacher can probably help you overcome your difficulties.