

SQUARE TRAINS EXPLANATIONS LESSON

Grade Level and Course: 9th grade Algebra 1

Time Frame: 15-20 minutes

Content Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify characteristics of a good mathematical explanation.

Language Objectives:

- After reading three sample explanations, students will be able to express why or why not each sample was representative of a good explanation verbally and in writing.

Materials:

- Three sample explanations

Begin lesson

- Write the following three different explanations on the board.
 - You can use the top, the bottom, and the other lines left.
 - You can find the perimeter by adding the top, the bottom, and then the two ends.
 - You can find the perimeter by adding up all the lines.
- As a Writing to Learn or Bell Work activity, have students write down which explanation they thought was the best and why. (Which explanation do you think is the strongest for our activity yesterday?)

Whole-Class Discussion:

- Write the When students are done reflecting on the explanations, ask some students to share their response or any other thoughts.
- As students are discussing the three different explanations, work with students to identify characteristics of a good explanation. Write these on the board as they come up.
 - Some characteristics of a good explanation:
 - Clear, easy to understand
 - Specific, detailed
 - Supporting evidence
 - Uses math language
 - Organized

Closure:

- Encourage students to reflect on their own explanations as they complete work throughout the year.