LIMIT OF A FUNCTION

The limit of a function f as x approaches p is the number L if the value of the function gets closer and closer to L as x gets closer and closer to p.

$$\lim_{x \to p} f(x) = L$$

"the limit of f(x) as x approaches p is L"

Example:
$$\lim_{x \to 3} (x^2 - 1) = 8$$

		/
I	Inputs approaching 3 from the	left 🔪
-		-

p	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.9	2.99	2.999	2.9999
f(p)	3.84	5.25	6.29	7.41	7.9401	7.9940	7.9994

Inputs approaching 3 from the right

p	3.0001	3.001	3.01	3.1	3.5	3.7	4
f(p)	8.0006	8.0060	8.0601	8.61	11.25	12.69	15

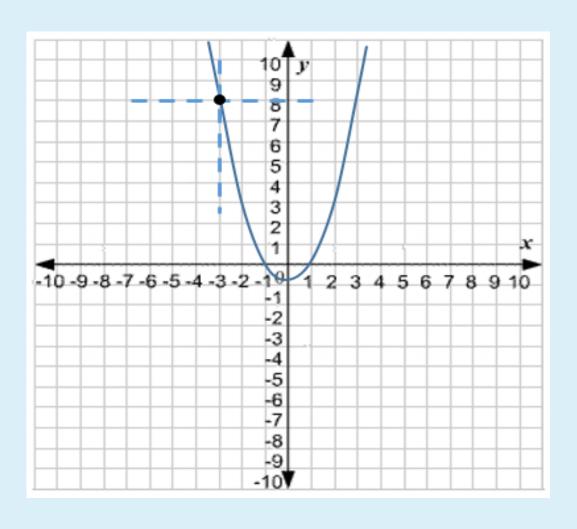
One-sided limits are those that approach to a single real value from one side of a function, either the left or the right.

left-sided or left-hand limit:
$$\lim_{x\to p^-} f(x)$$
 ex. $\lim_{x\to 3^-} (x^2-1)$ right-sided or right-hand limits: $\lim_{x\to p^+} f(x)$ ex. $\lim_{x\to 3^+} (x^2-1)$

Note: The limit of a function exists if the left-hand and right-hand limits exist and are the same.

$$\lim_{x\to p} f(x)$$
 exists and is equal to L iff the $\lim_{x\to p^-} f(x) = L$ and $\lim_{x\to p^+} f(x) = L$

Example: By inspection, determine the $\lim_{x\to -3} (x^2 - 1)$



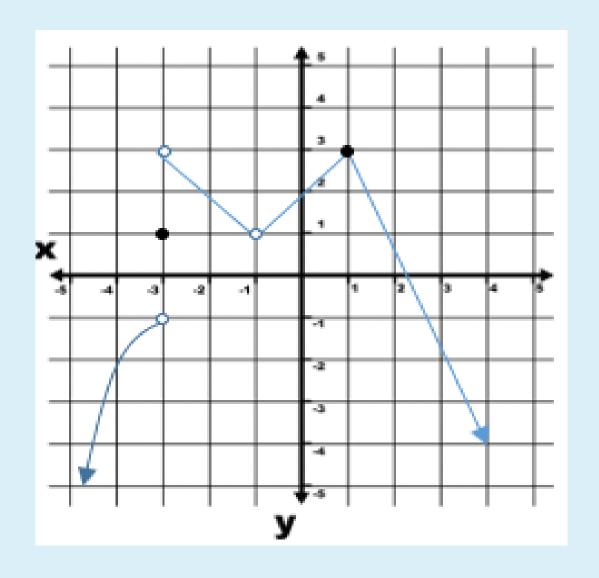
$$\lim_{x \to -3^{-}} (x^2 - 1) = 8$$

$$\lim_{x \to -3^+} (x^2 - 1) = 8$$

Therefore,

$$\lim_{x\to -3}(x^2-1)=8$$

Example: Let us consider the function whose graph is shown below.



a:
$$f(1) = 3$$

$$\lim_{x \to 1} f(x) = 3$$

$$b: f(-1) = DNE$$

$$\lim_{x \to -1} f(x) = 1$$

$$c: f(-3) = 1$$

$$\lim_{x \to -3} f(x) = DNE$$

LIMIT LAWS:

Law 1: Limit of a Constant

If
$$f(x) = c$$
, where c is a constant, then $\lim_{x \to p} f(x) = c$

Example: (1)
$$\lim_{x\to 2} 7 = 7$$

$$(2) \lim_{x \to -1} \frac{\pi}{2} = \frac{\pi}{2}$$

Law 2: Identity Law of Limits

If
$$f(x) = x$$
, then $\lim_{x \to p} x = p$

Example: (1)
$$\lim_{x \to 3} x = 3$$

$$(2) \lim_{w \to 1/2} w = \frac{1}{2}$$

Law 3:
$$\lim_{x \to p} k \cdot f(x) = k \cdot \lim_{x \to p} f(x)$$
$$\lim_{x \to p} k \cdot f(x) = k \cdot L$$

Example:
$$(1) \lim_{x \to -2} 2x = 2 \cdot \lim_{x \to -2} x = 2 \cdot -2 = -4$$

(2)
$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{3x}{4} = \frac{3}{4} \cdot \lim_{x \to 2} x = \frac{3}{4} \cdot 2 = \frac{6}{4} = \frac{3}{2}$$

Law 4: The limit of a sum or difference of two functions as *x* approaches *p* is equal to the sum or difference of their limits.

$$\lim_{x \to p} [f(x) \pm g(x)] = \lim_{x \to p} f(x) \pm \lim_{x \to p} g(x)$$
$$\lim_{x \to p} [f(x) \pm g(x)] = L \pm M$$

Example: (1)
$$\lim_{x\to 2} (4x - 3) = \lim_{x\to 2} 4x - \lim_{x\to 2} 3$$

= $4 \cdot \lim_{x\to 2} x - \lim_{x\to 2} 3$
= $4 \cdot 2 - 3$
 $\lim_{x\to 2} (4x - 3) = 5$

Law 5: The limit of a product of two functions as x approaches p is equal to the product of their limits.

$$\lim_{x \to p} [f(x) \cdot g(x)] = \lim_{x \to p} f(x) \cdot \lim_{x \to p} g(x)$$
$$\lim_{x \to p} [f(x) \cdot g(x)] = L \cdot M$$

Example: (1)
$$\lim_{x \to -1} (x+3)(x-2) = \lim_{x \to -1} (x+3) \cdot \lim_{x \to -1} (x-2)$$

$$= \left[\lim_{x \to -1} (x+3) \right] \left[\lim_{x \to -1} (x-2) \right]$$

$$= \left[\lim_{x \to -1} x + \lim_{x \to -1} 3 \right] \left[\lim_{x \to -1} x - \lim_{x \to -1} 2 \right]$$

$$= [-1+3][-1-2]$$

$$= [2][-3]$$

$$\lim_{x \to -1} (x+3)(x-2) = -6$$

Law 6: The limit of a quotient of two functions as x approaches p is equal to the quotient of their limits.

$$\lim_{x \to p} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} = \frac{\lim_{x \to p} f(x)}{\lim_{x \to p} g(x)} \text{ then } \lim_{x \to p} \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} = \frac{L}{M'} \text{ where } M \neq 0$$

Example: (1)
$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{2x - 3}{x + 1} = \frac{\lim_{x \to 2} (2x - 3)}{\lim_{x \to 2} (x + 1)} = \frac{\lim_{x \to 2} 2x - \lim_{x \to 2} 3}{\lim_{x \to 2} x + \lim_{x \to 2} 1}$$
$$= \frac{2 \cdot \lim_{x \to 2} x - \lim_{x \to 2} 3}{\lim_{x \to 2} x + \lim_{x \to 2} 1} = \frac{2 \cdot 2 - 3}{2 + 1}$$
$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{2x - 3}{x + 1} = \frac{1}{3}$$

Law 7: The **limit of an** *n***th power** of a function as *x* approaches *p* is equal to the *n*th power of its limit.

$$\lim_{x \to p} [f(x)]^n = \left[\lim_{x \to p} f(x) \right]^n$$

$$\lim_{x \to p} [f(x)]^n = L^n$$

Example:

$$(1) \lim_{x \to 2} [x]^4 = \left[\lim_{x \to 2} x\right]^4 \qquad (2) \lim_{x \to 2} (x^3 - 2x^2) = \lim_{x \to 2} x^3 - \lim_{x \to 2} 2x^2$$

$$= [2]^4 \qquad = \lim_{x \to 2} x^3 - 2 \cdot \lim_{x \to 2} x^2$$

$$= \left[\lim_{x \to 2} x\right]^3 - 2 \left[\lim_{x \to 2} x\right]^2$$

$$= [2]^3 - 2[2]^2$$

$$\lim_{x \to 2} (x^3 - 2x^2) = \mathbf{0}$$

Law 8: The **limit of an** *n***th root** of a function as *x* approaches *p* is equal to the nth root of its limit.

$$\lim_{x \to p} \sqrt[n]{f(x)} = \sqrt[n]{\lim_{x \to p} f(x)}$$

$$\lim_{x\to p} \sqrt[n]{f(x)} = \sqrt[n]{L} \text{ or } L^{\frac{1}{n}}$$

Example:

$$\lim_{x \to 2} \sqrt[3]{5x - 2} = \sqrt[3]{\lim_{x \to 2} (5x - 2)} = \sqrt[3]{5 \cdot 2 - 2}$$

$$= \sqrt[3]{\lim_{x \to 2} 5x - \lim_{x \to 2} 2}$$

$$= \sqrt[3]{10 - 2}$$

$$= \sqrt[3]{10 - 2}$$

$$= \sqrt[3]{8}$$

Note: The $\lim_{x\to p} f(x) = f(p)$.

Examples:

$$(1)\lim_{x\to 3}2x^3 = 2.[3]^3 = \mathbf{54}$$

$$(2)\lim_{x\to 2}(1-2x+3x^2-x^3)$$

$$= 1 - 2(2) + 3(2)^2 - (2)^3$$

$$=1-2(2)+3(4)-(8)$$

$$= 1 - 4 + 12 - 8$$

$$= 1$$

$$(3) \lim_{x \to -2} \frac{x^2 - 7x - 9}{4x - 5}$$

$$= \frac{(-2)^2 - 7(-2) - 9}{4(-2) - 5}$$

$$= \frac{4 + 14 - 9}{-8 - 5}$$

$$= \frac{9}{-13}$$

However, evaluating the limit by direct substitution is not always possible.

Example:
$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{x^2 + 5x - 14}{x - 2} =$$

Using direct substitution,
$$\lim_{x\to 2} \frac{x^2 + 5x - 14}{x - 2} = \frac{0}{0}$$
, the function indeterminate.

It means that 2 is not in the domain of
$$f(x) = \frac{x^2 + 5x - 14}{x - 2}$$

X	1.899	1.999	1.99999	2	2.00001	2.001	2.25
$\frac{x^2 + 5x - 14}{x - 2}$	8.899	8.999	8.99999	DNE	9.00001	9.001	9.25

Example 1:
$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{x^2 + 5x - 14}{x - 2} =$$

Solution:
$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{x^2 + 5x - 14}{x - 2} = \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{(x + 7)(x - 2)}{x - 2}$$
$$= \lim_{x \to 2} (x + 7)$$
$$= 2 + 7$$
$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{x^2 + 5x - 14}{x - 2} = 9$$

Note:: This method of evaluating a limit is called the *dividing out technique*.

Dividing Out Technique

Example 2:
$$\lim_{x \to -4} \frac{x^2 + x - 12}{x^2 + 6x + 8}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to -4} \frac{(x+4)(x-3)}{(x+4)(x+2)}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to -4} \frac{(x-3)}{(x+2)}$$

$$=\frac{-4-3}{-4+2}$$

$$=\frac{-7}{-2}$$

$$=\frac{7}{2}$$

Example 3:
$$\lim_{x \to 3} \frac{x^3 - 27}{x^2 - 9}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 3} \frac{(x-3)(x^2+3x+9)}{(x+3)(x-3)}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 3} \frac{(x^2 + 3x + 9)}{(x+3)}$$

$$=\frac{(3)^2+3(3)+9}{3+3}$$

$$=\frac{9+9+9}{3+3}=\frac{27}{6}$$

$$=\frac{9}{2}$$

Rationalizing Technique

The next examples can be done by rationalizing the numerator or the denominator to get rid of the radical signs and make the dividing out technique possible.

Example 4:

$$\lim_{x \to 2} \frac{x - 2}{\sqrt{x^2 - 4}} = \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{x - 2}{\sqrt{x^2 - 4}} \cdot \frac{\sqrt{x^2 - 4}}{\sqrt{x^2 - 4}} = \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{\sqrt{x^2 - 4}}{x + 2}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{(x - 2)\sqrt{x^2 - 4}}{(\sqrt{x^2 - 4})^2} = \frac{\sqrt{(2)^2 - 4}}{2 + 2}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{(x - 2)\sqrt{x^2 - 4}}{x^2 - 4} = \frac{\sqrt{4 - 4}}{4}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 2} \frac{(x - 2)\sqrt{x^2 - 4}}{(x + 2)(x - 2)} = \frac{0}{4}$$

$$= 0$$

Rationalizing Technique

Example 5:

$$\lim_{x \to 1} \frac{x - 1}{\sqrt{x^2 + 3} - 2} = \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{x - 1}{\sqrt{x^2 + 3} - 2} \cdot \frac{\sqrt{x^2 + 3} + 2}{\sqrt{x^2 + 3} + 2} = \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{(\sqrt{x^2 + 3} + 2)}{x + 1}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{(x - 1)(\sqrt{x^2 + 3} + 2)}{(\sqrt{x^2 + 3})^2 - (2)^2} = \frac{(\sqrt{(1)^2 + 3} + 2)}{1 + 1}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{(x - 1)(\sqrt{x^2 + 3} + 2)}{(x^2 + 3) - 4} = \frac{(\sqrt{4} + 2)}{2}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{(x - 1)(\sqrt{x^2 + 3} + 2)}{x^2 - 1} = \frac{2 + 2}{2}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{(x - 1)(\sqrt{x^2 + 3} + 2)}{(x + 1)(x - 1)} = \frac{4}{2} = 2$$

Limits at Infinity

To describe the behavior of a function as *x* increases or decreases without bound defines the limit of a function at infinity.

$$\lim_{x\to+\infty} f(x)$$
 or $\lim_{x\to-\infty} f(x)$

Some properties of the *limits at infinity*:

$$(1)\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{1}{x}=0$$

$$(2) \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{1}{x^n} = 0 \qquad (4) \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{1}{c^x} = 0$$

$$(1) \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{1}{x} = 0 \qquad (3) \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{1}{\sqrt[n]{x}} = 0$$

$$(4)\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{1}{c^x}=0$$

where c > 0, c is any real number

Some properties of *infinite limits*:

If $\lim_{x\to c} f(x) = \infty$ and $\lim_{x\to c} g(x) = L$ then for every c and L that are real,

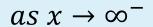
$$(5) \lim_{x \to c} [f(x) \pm g(x)] = \lim_{x \to c} f(x) \pm \lim_{x \to c} g(x) = \infty$$

(6) If
$$L > 0$$
 then $\lim_{x \to c} [f(x)g(x)] = \lim_{x \to c} f(x) \cdot \lim_{x \to c} g(x) = \infty$

(7) If
$$L < 0$$
 then $\lim_{x \to c} [f(x)g(x)] = \lim_{x \to c} f(x) \cdot \lim_{x \to c} g(x) = -\infty$

$$(8)\lim_{x\to c}\frac{g(x)}{f(x)} = \frac{\lim_{x\to c}g(x)}{\lim_{x\to c}f(x)} = 0$$

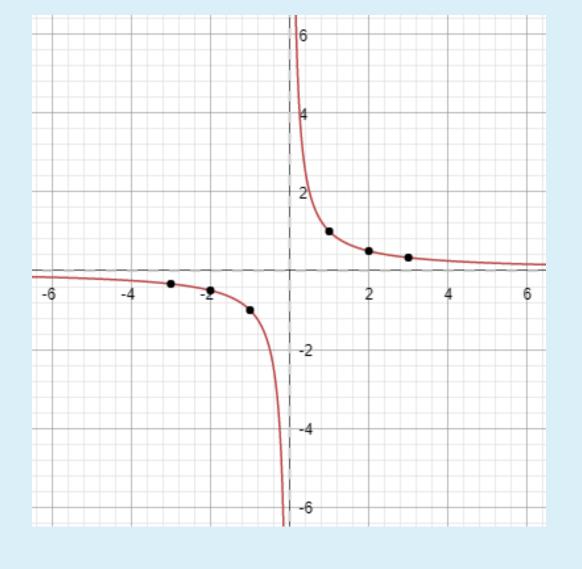
Example 1: Let us observe the graph of $f(x) = \frac{1}{x}$ and find the $\lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{1}{x}$



x	f(x)
-3	-0.33333
-2	-0.5
-1	-1
-0.5	-2
-0.25	-4
-0.10	-10

$$as x \rightarrow \infty^+$$

X	f(x)
3	0.33333
2	0.5
1	1
0.5	2
0.25	4
0.10	10



Example 2:

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} (4x) = 4 \lim_{x \to \infty} x$$
$$= 4 \cdot \infty$$
$$\lim_{x \to \infty} (4x) = \infty$$

Example 3:

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} \left(3 + \frac{1}{3^x} \right) = \lim_{x \to \infty} 3 + \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{1}{3^x}$$
$$= 3 + 0$$
$$\lim_{x \to \infty} \left(3 + \frac{1}{3^x} \right) = 3$$

Example 4:

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} (3x^3 - 2x) = \lim_{x \to \infty} 3x$$

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} 2x = \infty$$

Solution:

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} (3x^3 - 2x) = \lim_{x \to \infty} x^3 (3 - 2x^{-2})$$

$$= \lim_{x \to \infty} x^3 \left(3 - \frac{2}{x^2} \right)$$

$$= \lim_{x \to \infty} x^3 \cdot \lim_{x \to \infty} \left(3 - \frac{2}{x^2} \right)$$

$$= \lim_{x \to \infty} x^3 \left[\lim_{x \to \infty} 3 - \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{2}{x^2} \right]$$

$$= \infty [3 - 0]$$

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} (3x^3 - 2x) = \infty$$

but we cannot subtract infinities!!!

Because infinity is not a number.

Example 5:
$$\lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{x^2 - 5x - 3}{2x^4 + 3x^3} = \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{x^4(x^{-2} - 5x^{-3} - 3x^{-4})}{x^4(2 + 3x^{-1})}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{(x^{-2} - 5x^{-3} - 3x^{-4})}{(2 + 3x^{-1})}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{\frac{1}{x^2} - \frac{5}{x^3} - \frac{3}{x^4}}{2 + \frac{3}{x}}$$

$$= \frac{\lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{1}{x^2} - \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{5}{x^3} - \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{3}{x^4}}{\lim_{x \to \infty} 2 + \lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{3}{x}}$$

$$= \frac{0 - 0 - 0}{2 + 0} = \frac{0}{2}$$

$$\lim_{x \to \infty} \frac{x^2 - 5x - 3}{2x^4 + 3x^3} = \mathbf{0}$$

Limits involving Trigonometric Functions

4 Basic Limits Properties:

- $(1)\lim_{x\to p}\sin x = \sin p$
- $(2)\lim_{x\to p}\cos x = \cos p$

$$(3)\lim_{x\to 0}\frac{\sin x}{x}=1$$

$$(4) \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1 - \cos x}{x} = 0$$

Example 1:

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin x}{\cos x - 3} = \frac{\lim_{x \to 0} \sin x}{\lim_{x \to 0} (\cos x - 3)}$$

$$= \frac{\lim_{x \to 0} \sin x}{\lim_{x \to 0} \cos x - \lim_{x \to 0} 3}$$

$$= \frac{\sin 0}{\cos 0 - 3}$$

$$= \frac{0}{1 - 3}$$

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin x}{\cos x - 3} = \mathbf{0}$$

Example 2:

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{2 \sin 3x}{3x} = 2 \cdot \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin 3x}{3x} = 2 \cdot 1 = 2$$

$(1)\lim_{x\to p}\sin x = \sin p$

$$(2) \lim_{x \to p} \cos x = \cos p$$

$$\sin x$$

$$(3)\lim_{x\to 0}\frac{\sin x}{x}=1$$

 $x \rightarrow 0 \cos x$

$$(4)\lim_{x\to 0}\frac{1-\cos x}{x}=0$$

Example 3:

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sec x - 1}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\frac{1}{\cos x} - 1}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1 - \cos x}{x} \cdot \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1}{\cos x}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\frac{1 - \cos x}{\cos x}}{x} = 0 \cdot \frac{1}{\cos 0}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1 - \cos x}{\cos x} \cdot \frac{1}{x} = 0$$

Example 4:

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin 5x}{x} = \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin 5x}{x} \cdot \frac{5}{5}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{5\sin 5x}{5x}$$

$$= 5 \cdot \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin 5x}{5x}$$

$$= 5 \cdot 1$$

$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin 5x}{x} = 5$$

$$(1)\lim_{x\to p}\sin x = \sin p$$

$$(2) \lim_{x \to p} \cos x = \cos p$$

$$\sin x$$

$$(3)\lim_{x\to 0}\frac{\sin x}{x}=1$$

$$(4) \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1 - \cos x}{x} = 0$$

Example 5:

$$\lim_{x \to -3} \frac{\sin(x+3)}{x^2 + 7x + 12}$$

but for x = -3, the denominator is 0

$$= \lim_{x \to -3} \frac{\sin(x+3)}{(x+3)(x+4)}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to -3} \frac{\sin(x+3)}{(x+3)} \cdot \frac{1}{(x+4)}$$

$$= \lim_{x \to -3} \frac{\sin(x+3)}{(x+3)} \cdot \lim_{x \to -3} \frac{1}{(x+4)}$$

$$= 1 \cdot \frac{1}{-3+4} = 1 \cdot 1$$

$$\lim_{x \to -3} \frac{\sin(x+3)}{x^2 + 7x + 12} = \mathbf{1}$$

- $(1)\lim_{x\to p}\sin x=\sin p$
- (2) $\lim \cos x = \cos p$

(2)
$$\lim_{x \to p} \cos x = \cos x$$
(3)
$$\lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin x}{x} = 1$$

$$1 - \cos x$$

$$(4) \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1 - \cos x}{x} = 0$$

Practice Task #3: Limits of Algebraic Functions

A. Complete the table of values ang give the limit of the given functions.

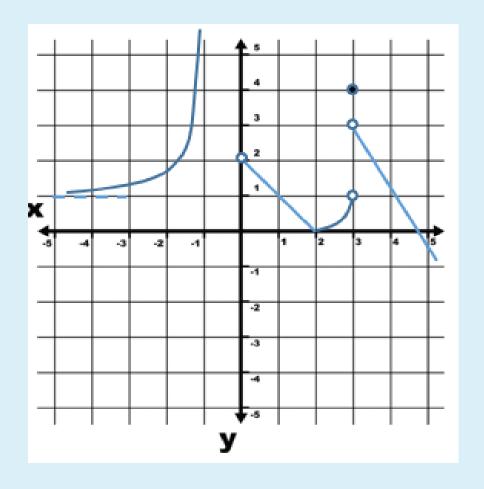
$$\lim_{x \to -2^{-}} (x^2 - 3x + 2) = \underline{\qquad}$$

X	<i>f</i> (x)
-3	
-2.75	
-2.50	
-2.25	
-2.10	
-2.001	
-2.0001	

$$\lim_{x \to 1^+} \frac{x^2 + 3x + 2}{x - 1} = \underline{\hspace{1cm}}$$

X	<i>f(x)</i>
2	
1.75	
1.50	
1.25	
1.001	
1.0001	
1.000001	

B. Given the graph of the function f(x), fill in the table with the missing values.



a.	f(0)	=
b.	f(2)	=
C.	f(3)	=
d.	$\lim_{x\to 0^-} f(x)$	=
e.	$\lim_{x\to 0^+} f(x)$	=
f.	$\lim_{x\to 3^-} f(x)$	=
g.	$\lim_{x\to 3^+} f(x)$	=

Home Work #3:

Evaluate the limit of the given functions.

$$(a) \lim_{x \to 2} (3x^2 - 4x + 1)$$

(b)
$$\lim_{x\to 0} \frac{x^2 - 25}{x^2 - 4x - 5}$$

$$(c) \lim_{x \to 1} \frac{7x^2 - 4x - 3}{3x^2 - 4x + 1}$$

$$(d) \lim_{x \to 3} \frac{\sqrt{x^2 + 7} - 3}{x + 3}$$

$$(e) \lim_{x \to 5} \frac{\frac{1}{x} - \frac{1}{5}}{x - 5}$$

$$(f) \lim_{x \to 5} \frac{\sqrt{x+4} - 3}{x - 5}$$

$$(g)\lim_{x\to 1}\frac{\sqrt[3]{x}-1}{\sqrt{x}-1}$$

$$(h)\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{x+1}{2x+1}$$

Home Work #3:

$$(i)\lim_{x\to\infty}(3^{-x}+2)$$

$$(j)\lim_{x\to\infty}\frac{9x^2}{x+2}$$

$$(k) \lim_{x \to -\infty} \frac{2x^2 - 5}{x^3 - 2x^2 - 1}$$

$$(l)\lim_{x\to\infty}(x^3-x^2+2x)$$

$$(m)\lim_{x\to 0}\frac{\cos x}{\sin x-3}$$

$$(n)\lim_{x\to 0}\frac{\sin 3x}{2x}$$

$$(o) \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{1 - \cos x}{\sin x}$$

$$(p) \lim_{x \to 0} \frac{\sin 5x - \sin 3x}{\sin x}$$
Hint: $\sin \alpha - \sin \beta = 2 \sin \frac{\alpha - \beta}{2} \cos \frac{\alpha + \beta}{2}$