**My Math Biography**

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| **Name: Kevin White** |  |
| **Course:1316** | **Instructor:** **Ekici, Celil** |

**When I’ve had success in math courses, it’s because I have made sense of the mathematical ideas rather than memorizing information.**

Always (1) Usually (2) Sometimes (3) Rarely (4) Never (5)

**When I feel “stuck” on a concept, I am able to use available resources (lesson handouts, class notes, peers, the instructor/TAs) to eventually grasp it.**

Always (1) Usually (2) Sometimes (3) Rarely (4) Never (5)

**I feel comfortable asking questions to better understand mathematics.**

Always (1) Usually (2) Sometimes (3) Rarely (4) Never (5)

**I feel comfortable sharing my ideas, solutions, and suggestions in whole-class discussion.**

Always (1) Usually (2) Sometimes (3) Rarely (4) Never (5)

**How confident are you in your ability to learn mathematics?**

Very Confident(1) Fairly Confident (2) Neutral (3) Not Very Confident (4) Not At All Confident (5)

**In each box there are three statements. Give each statement a percentage so that the sum of the three percentages in each section is 100%.**

**Mathematics is**

% 90 a given body of knowledge and standard procedures. A set of universal truths and rules which need to be conveyed to students.

% 5 a creative subject in which the teacher should take a facilitating role, allowing students to create their own concepts and methods.

% 5 an interconnected body of ideas which the teacher and the student create together through discussion.

% 100 Total

**Learning is**

% 20 an interpersonal activity in which students are challenged and arrive at understanding through discussion.

% 20 an individual activity based on practical exploration and reflection.

% 60 an individual activity based on watching, listening and imitating until fluency is attained.

% 100 Total

**Teaching is**

% 80 assessing when a student is ready to learn; providing a stimulating environment to facilitate exploration; avoiding misunderstandings by the careful sequencing of experiences.

% 5 structuring a linear curriculum for the students; giving verbal explanations and checking that these have been understood through practice questions; correcting misunderstandings when students fail to 'grasp' what is taught.

% 15 a non-linear dialogue between teacher and students in which meanings and connections are explored verbally. Misunderstandings are made explicit and worked on.

% 100 Total

Math & Teaching Reflections:

I believe that Mathematics can be a set of instructions with changing variables to produce a product. I believe mathematics is straightforward and predictable and does not bring new ideas to light but just refine old ideas that are then passed down. Because of the linear nature of math, I learn best when I am able to practice through feedback on what I’m doing wrong, and what I’m doing right. I always feel like I struggle remember the nitty gritty of every rule and instruction given but always remember the big picture and ideas behind things. I love when I can relate the mathematical equations to real world situations. This motivates me to learn and I can see the correlations between the equations and real-world problems. However, when there is no practical correlation I am often confused and don’t understand what I should be doing, lost in the thought of why or what the point of the concept is. I need a real-world example to truly understand what I’d accomplishing or doing. I believe math is a very controversial subject because many see it as a one-sided right or wrong. I hypothesize if you approached math less like a true or false, and more like steps to solving a riddle, you could get to the right answer if you just put the steps together. In almost every other subject, if you don’t understand the subject one hundred percent you still get credit for knowing the basics. That’s what makes math hard, teachers usually only accept right or wrong, instead of getting the steps towards the answer correct for some credit. If you spend half an hour on a complicated equation and just get a red X on your paper, you can’t grow. You will never know where you went wrong. Individual feedback is one of the most important steps to getting better at math, and lack of proper feedback will bring a group of likeminded kids to fall behind and never understand the concept to the point of where there reputation of math is tarnished. When I went to your class the other day I got exited when you started talking about implementing the math and trying to explain how it is important in the real world. You got exited just talking about that and I could sense the passion for the subject when you started to talk about it. I’m exited to try and find out how to make music and animations with Trigonometry. I hope I can finally make the connections between math and the world I feel like I have been missing for so long. For the first time in years, I’m looking forward to math class, thank you.