

**Title of Session:** Math Transformers - Raps and Rhymes

**Moderator:** Patricia Chen

**Title of File:** 20071113transformers

**Date:** November 13, 2007

Room: Math Transformers Group

**PatriciaCh:** Let's Introduce ourselves

**BjB :** we usually start all tapped in discussions with introductions. Please tell Pat where you are located and what you teach

**PatriciaCh:** I'm Pat ... I am a 7th grade teacher in Florida

**DevetteG:** My name is Devette and I'm currently student teaching in Kindergarten.

**JenniferLD:** My name is Jennifer and I teach Algebra in Louisiana

**VernaLynnG:** I'm Verna Lynn and I live in Saskatchewan, Canada and I teach Middle years math and computers

**JulieMo:** Hello, my name is Julie and I am a 3rd grade bilingual math and science teacher. I am in Spring, TX.

**KathleenLO:** I am Kathleen, I am doing my student teaching in a fourth grade in Boston, MA

**PatriciaCh:** I think we have everyone ...

**PatriciaCh:** I want everyone to think about .... how they remember things ... what are the tricks or strategies

**BjB :** post it notes!

**JulieMo:** my planner and making lists

**JenniferLD:** planner and rewriting things

**PatriciaCh:** so you have ownership ....you write it down

**KathleenLO:** either writing it down right away, or repeating it over and over in my head until I find a pen

**DevetteG:** I would write it down in my planner.

**VernaLynnG:** I need to write it down

**BjB:** mnemonics help

**JulieMo:** I agree

**JenniferLD:** me too.

**PatriciaCh:** over the years of teaching ...I find kids remember concepts through mnemonics ...songs etc

**VernaLynnG:** I was going to say that but I couldn't remember how to spell mnemonics

**VernaLynnG:** I guess I should write it down

**PatriciaCh:** algebra is tough ... but you can use the same strategies ...

**BjB** chuckles

**JenniferLD:** I have definitely experienced that w/ my students

**PatriciaCh:** there is a mnemonic for quadratic equation ...

**KathleenLO:** FOIL!

**JulieMo:** I used that in High School

**KathleenLO:** I remember that one-front insides, outsides last

**PatriciaCh:** it is really a song ... I was unable to contact my friend to get the words ...

**JenniferLD:** yea, I just got through teaching that

**PatriciaCh:** you can assign students ...to create a song or rap for a content

**BjB:** very cool!

**PatriciaCh:** this is ownership .... the students will remember the lesson well ..

**VernaLynnG:** They do remember it better if they have to come up with it

**PatriciaCh:** think about the mnemonics that you have learned ... what are they>

**VernaLynnG:** BEDMAS

**PatriciaCh:** yes ... if they write it ...perform it ... oh yeah

**PatriciaCh:** what is BEDMAS?

**VernaLynnG:** Order of operations

**JenniferLD:** what is the b?

**PatriciaCh:** ok ... PEMDAS .. that is how we word it in the States

**VernaLynnG:** Brackets, exponents, division/multiplication, addition/subtraction

**PatriciaCh:** brackets

**JenniferLD:** thanks

**KathleenLO:** I learned "Please Excuse my dear aunt sally" (parenthesis, exponent, mult, divis, add, sub)

**PatriciaCh:** we use parenthesis

**JulieMo:** I did too. I still remember it

**JenniferLD:** I have to go over it daily w/ my kids

**VernaLynnG:** That works too up here we use BEDMAS

**PatriciaCh:** what about ...i before e..except after c

**JenniferLD:** I remember that one too

**PatriciaCh:** the trouble with PEMDAS... is the last 4 operations ...

**VernaLynnG:** What do you mean

**PatriciaCh:** in grade school ... many kids remember to multiply before divide ...

**PatriciaCh:** they forget ... whichever comes first ...from left to right

**JenniferLD:** I circle the m and d and the a and s and tell them they have to work left to right

**PatriciaCh:** I write it this way on the board. going downward .. P....E.....M/D....A/S

**PatriciaCh:** I put the / so they have to think ...left to right

**JenniferLD:** that

**JenniferLD:** that's good

**VernaLynnG:** I tell my kids it is like reading a book you read from left to right

**PatriciaCh:** I also tell the story ....P is the King ...Queen is E ... M/D ARE TWIN SISTERS

**JulieMo:** do you mean that they switch the order of M & D and A & S?

**PatriciaCh:** AND A/S ARE TWIN BROTHERS ..

**PatriciaCh:** no my kids just do what they see ...without thinking ...the left to right concept

**PatriciaCh:** or as you say ... they will add or subtract ...just because the operation is in front of the division ..

**PatriciaCh:** for my students ... I am at the stage ... where I am going to ask them to write up rhyme ... song...rap ... to remember the order ...not just Please excuse my dear Aunt Sally

**KathleenLO:** Have they created any noteworthy rhymes?

**VernaLynnG:** Do you give them the tune or do they pick that too

**PatriciaCh:** the kids have ...you let them pick a tune ....

**PatriciaCh:** most kids rap today ... that is one thing that I am not good at

**VernaLynnG:** Me neither

**VernaLynnG:** I wonder if you could do something with instant messaging

**PatriciaCh:** I wrote one for the metric system ...using the tune Ruben Ruben ...old..old folk song

**VernaLynnG:** That was supposed to be instant

**PatriciaCh:** what do you mean by instant messaging

**VernaLynnG:** Have the kids make up some sort of dialogue in instant message language

**PatriciaCh:** if you all check the featured link ...you can see what other teachers have done

**PatriciaCh:** if you want the kids to remember a concept .... the instant messaging vocab will work for them ....

**PatriciaCh:** the idea is for them to create a mnemonic of some sort ...to help them to remember

**VernaLynnG:** Yea I guess as long as they create it it doesn't matter what format it takes

**JenniferLD:** I think that's a good idea as long as I don't have to sing it!!

**VernaLynnG:** Me neither

**PatriciaCh:** the fun part is ... the kids want to perform

**JulieMo:** We used something like this in 3rd grade for rounding. It is the elevator model and the kids chant 0,1,2,3,4 stay on the floor, 5,6,7,8,9 go up the line. We tried to make one up in Spanish but it didn't rhyme as well.

**PatriciaCh:** I tell them the old standard ..they do the new

**JulieMo:** I bet if you sing it the kids will remember it even better because it would be funny for them

**PatriciaCh:** I like that better ... the round down for 0 1 2 3 4

**KathleenLO:** Some of those songs from the featured link are really cute

**PatriciaCh:** it is really funny ...

**PatriciaCh:** yes ..they are ....I try not to sing ....

**PatriciaCh:** there are more out there .....if you can search on the web

**KathleenLO:** Quick Question: When your students create these mnemonics, do they work individually, groups, or as a whole class?

**PatriciaCh:** individually or group .... I give them a choice ....

**PatriciaCh:** it is always good to model the procedure as a class ...

**PatriciaCh:** so take the rounding rules .... or order of operations ...we can do it as a class

**PatriciaCh:** once the kids get the idea of how ...they will be given concepts ...it is a good way of teaching ... a different twist to jig saw

**VernaLynnG:** Well I have to sign off. This was my first time at this. I did enjoy and I

will be back. Thanks

**PatriciaCh:** mean, median, mode, range and outlier is a good one to do

**PatriciaCh:** see you soon

**VernaLynnG** left the room (signed off).

**JenniferLD:** how would you do mean, median, mode w/ mnemonics

**JulieMo:** allowing them to create their own is a good idea for bilingual students

**PatriciaCh:** some of my students rap this ... the definition of mean, median, mode

**PatriciaCh:** mathematically speaking ..... all three words ...define as average ... the kids have to explain ... when it is applicable ... in our state test ...the kids are tested for this application ...

**PatriciaCh:** knowing how to solve is not good enough

**JenniferLD:** right, b/c they can just memorize it for a test but not really understand the concept

**PatriciaCh:** yes ... and the state test wants to see if the students can apply the concept

**PatriciaCh:** when the students write or design a way for them to remember the concept .....they have ownership

**PatriciaCh:** the fact they laughed at the performances ....helps them to remember

**JenniferLD:** that makes sense but I am a little hesitant about how my high school kids would respond to this

**PatriciaCh:** what grade?

**JulieMo:** What guidelines do you give your students when you have them create a rap/rhyme?

**PatriciaCh:** it has to clean ... I have 7th graders

**KathleenLO:** So Pat, you said that you teach in a 7th grade...have you seen or heard of this being effective with elementary students? I know that my kids are capable or remembering mnemonics given, but I think they would have a hard time coming up with rhymes without a lot of support

**JenniferLD:** 10-12 low performing students. These students have generally failed

Algebra more than once.

**JulieMo:** I was having the same doubts as Kathleen

**PatriciaCh:** for the high schoolers .....tell them the truth ....

**BjB :** lots of counting poems and rhymes for the little ones

**PatriciaCh:** they remember about Aunt Sally ....why can't they be allow to create something that helps them to remember concepts and pass the class

**JenniferLD:** that's true. maybe it's worth the try.

**PatriciaCh:** my friend learned the quadratic song in high school ....she is an art teacher ... she still can sing it after all these years

**KathleenLO:** I would definitely be willing to try

**PatriciaCh:** I would find some songs or rhymes .... geared for high schoolers and share it with them

**JulieMo:** How much time do you think the students should be allowed to take in creating these?

**BjB :** good resource for elementary is  
<http://www.songsforteaching.com/numberscounting.htm>

**PatriciaCh:** give a class period ....but model first ...

**PatriciaCh:** do you do extra credit .....

**JulieMo:** no but that would be an option

**PatriciaCh:** if you don't have the class time ...model ... possibly extra credit ... use it on the test

**PatriciaCh:** I allow the kids to use vocab cards on the test ....one less thing to memorize...they write it out on index cards ...

**JenniferLD:** I let mine use study guides for their tests as well

**PatriciaCh:** on a midterm ...bonus points

**JulieMo:** I am going to give this a try because there are not many mnemonic devices in Spanish.

**PatriciaCh:** tailor the concept to the needs of your student

**JulieMo:** I agree. Sometimes you just have to make your own things

**PatriciaCh:** I am not aware of any .... but I am sure there must be some ...but if the kids help you write them.... you have them to share with the next class

**PatriciaCh:** all these best practices ...they are accidents that were discovered

**PatriciaCh:** kids tell me what and why they remember ...usually it is when something funny ... or some silly thing I did in class

**JenniferLD:** I'm going to have to sign out now, How do I do this properly so that I will receive my transcript. The last 2 times I've done this, I haven't received a transcript

**PatriciaCh:** if log off ...the transcript is sent to you

**JenniferLD:** thanks, Thanks for the great info

**PatriciaCh:** if you don't get one ...let me know ... you will be on my transcript

**BjB :** Jennifer, make sure to logout...and check your spam or junk folder before you delete anything!

**JulieMo:** I have found some good songs at [www.freekidsmusic.com](http://www.freekidsmusic.com). They have one about the water cycle

**KathleenLO:** I am afraid I must be leaving too. Thank you so much for sharing your ideas.

**PatriciaCh:** no problem ... let me know

**BjB :** The next Math Transformers discussion is December 11

**PatriciaCh:** my pleasure

**PatriciaCh:** I have an idea ...

**BjB** listens

**PatriciaCh:** reviewing for tests ....using game shows format

**BjB :** cool!

**PatriciaCh:** there are many creative people out there ... so I cannot claim any credit



**JulieMo:** Yes! I like using jeopardy powerpoint

**PatriciaCh:** Jeopardy

**PatriciaCh:** Hollywood Squares ..Who wants to be a millionaire

**PatriciaCh:** the kids love Jeopardy

**PatriciaCh:** this is my first year doing this ...so it is work in progress....

**JulieMo:** I let them do it during small group time. I give them the laptop

**PatriciaCh:** I use it as review for tests....

**PatriciaCh:** it beats the old ... do # 1- 15 ...

**JulieMo:** definitely!

**PatriciaCh:** the only trouble is ... I only finished a few chapters ....it will have to wait til next summer

**PatriciaCh:** my problem is ...finding the time to create it

**BjB :** perhaps the kids can do the creating

**BjB :** why don't we make this the topic for your December discussion, Pat?

**PatriciaCh:** we can....

**JulieMo:** What chapters are you talking about?

**PatriciaCh:** the chapters are ...to those in my texts ....I create my own games ... to help students review concepts

**JulieMo:** I used to have the website for some that people had already created...

**PatriciaCh:** I don't .....my Jeopardy is content and text specific ...

**PatriciaCh:** so it is more work for me

**JulieMo:** Well, they were just templates so you were able to plug in your own. I have used it for math and LA

**PatriciaCh:** they have templates for the other two games that I mentioned... I will post the link before the 11th

**JulieMo:** Thank you

**PatriciaCh:** my pleasure ..I hope I will chat with you ... in December

**JulieMo:** Yes, I'll be back. There is a site that you can get music with no lyrics. I think they could be used by the kids [www.freeplaymusic.com](http://www.freeplaymusic.com)

**PatriciaCh:** thanks for the link ... as long as I don't have to sing ....

**PatriciaCh:** also ...all the old folk songs ..100 years old or more ...you can use it too

**JulieMo:** I don't like singing either but if that's what it takes for them to remember...

**PatriciaCh:** rap ...that is the way to go ....the kids can do that ... at least my middle schoolers...

**PatriciaCh:** elementary kids are forgiving

**JulieMo:** Sometimes :-)

**PatriciaCh:** yes .....they get very critical ..by the end of 6th grade ...

**PatriciaCh:** well ... it is 8 ... it is time for me to go

**JulieMo:** Thank you for the advice! I will def. use it!

**BjB** hugs Pat...thanks! See you in December

**PatriciaCh:** good night