

Journal Prompts for Elementary Students

Affective/Attitudinal (How do you feel?)
Explain how you feel about mathematics now as compared to before you took this class.
My best kept secret about math is...
If math could be a color (shape, sound), it would be...because...
I want to become better at math so that I...
People who are good at math...
My best experience with math was when...
My worst experience with math was when...
When it comes to math, I find it difficult to...
When I hear someone say math is fun, I...
Draw a picture of a mathematician and describe what a mathematician does.
If I were better at math, I would...
What kind of math figure are you? (Circle, square, triangle, parallelogram, etc.) Why did you choose that figure?
Describe your feelings about showing your work on the board or overhead.
Does mathematics or math class scare you in any way?
My three personal goals for this term are...
Describe how today's math class will affect your day.
What did you like most about your previous math class? What did you like the least?
My math grade now is ...because...
This is how I feel about Algebra (Pre-algebra, Percents, Fractions, etc.)
One mathematics activity I really enjoy is...because...
This is how I used math this week (outside of school)...
Draw a cartoon of the 'Math Monster' and write what the 'Math Monster' is saying to you.
Write a letter to a student who will be taking this class next year, giving some advice about this class.
Design two mathematical bumper stickers, one funny, one serious.
My parents feel that math is...

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Mathematical Content (What is it about?)
The difference between... and ... is...
I think a ... is... (I thought a ... was...)
How would you describe a ...?
What patterns do you notice in ...
How do you use ... in your life?
Make a list of objects or figures in the room which have ... How can you tell?
Write your own definition of a ...
Explain how ...
Write all you know about ...
How many squares are there on a chess board? Describe your strategy for solving this problem.
Describe the mathematics seen in a photograph. (Photograph may need to be provided).
Write and solve a word problem whose solution involves ...
Find a shortcut for ...
Explain the ...
Describe practical uses for ...
Compare and contrast the terms ...
Explain everything you know about ...
Write an explanation about the differences between ... and ...
How many dimensions does a pencil have? Explain your answer.
Why can't you divide by zero?
How can you find a number with thirteen factors?
What is a ...? Write all you can about ...
How do you simplify...?
Why do we need proofs in mathematics?
Why is it necessary...?

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Process (Explain how!)
The most important part of solving a problem is...
Write instructions for a fifth grader to follow when (adding fractions, finding percentages, calculating averages, etc.)
Find something that you learned today that is similar to something you already knew. Write about these similarities.
Do you use tables or diagrams when solving a problem? Why or why not?
You know several ways to.... (solve an equation, factor a quadratic, add fractions, etc.) Which method is your favorite? Why?
How important is being neat and organized to you in general, and when you are doing math?
When I study for a test, I...
Write a letter to your teacher explaining what you do understand about the topic, and what needs to be clarified.
When I read a math textbook, and see a word I don't know, I...
The key idea of the lesson today was...
When I see a word problem, the first thing I do is...Then I...
What are the benefits of journal writing for mathematics classes?
How could journal writing be changed to be more effective?
When you get a test back, do you make corrections or ask questions? Why or why not?
How do I read my math textbook?
Describe any computational procedure that you invented.
How should we use class time to the best advantage?
Write possible test questions for this unit.
What is the most significant thing you learned this week?
What questions are still unanswered at the end of this week?
Explain how you can improve your communication and cooperation in the mathematics classroom.
Describe any discoveries you make about mathematics (patterns, relationships, procedures, etc.).
Describe the process you undertook to solve this problem. (Problem needs to be provided.)
Write WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY, and HOW across the top of your page. Answer these questions based on today's class.
Describe the graph of...as if you were explaining it to a friend over the phone.