

Desmos Classroom Tips & Suggested Practices

1- Select activities with a purpose in mind and use that to inform any grading rubric you use to evaluate student work. For example, on a polygraph activity you might grade it as follows:

- 5 points: Appropriate math vocabulary applied when asking and answering questions within the polygraph activity.
- 10 points: Relevant and useful questions (i.e creativity, variety, lack of repetition)
- 5 points: Correct response(s) to question slides

Tip: You could make rubric cards where students have to score themselves on some components of the rubric.

2- Accounts/Sign-ins can be a breeze if your school has a google-based email. It is easy to sign-in with Google and this will automatically populate student names. Explain to students that they need to sign-in to save their work and return to it when appropriate. Apply appropriate consequences if students change their names to something that is not classroom appropriate. If students cannot use Google to sign- in, give them a few minutes the first time they use the app to create a log-in based on a format chosen by the teacher. This login will be used for: Desmos Graphing app, the Geometry app, and the student website (student.desmos.com).

3- Access to activities can be opened and closed by pausing the activity and unpausing to allow students access during class or outside of class. Also, you can archive activities after you are done to minimize the items in the history list.

4- Anonymize student accounts so that they do not know who they are working with and/or cannot see who has correct or incorrect responses. The anonymize button is useful especially if you want to display the teacher dashboard so students can work towards mastery and correct mistakes. When you choose to anonymize the system will automatically assign them the name of a mathematician.

Tip: Anonymizing can be educational by allowing students to research their mathematicians. You can mix up how this task is accomplished (i.e. 3-5 facts to share with the class, Bonus assignment/project).

5- Model and participate as needed to help students understand what is required. For example, the Polygraph activity is completed in pairs. You can be a rotating partner if there are an odd number of students in the class, so no students are idle during the activity. Having the teacher site and student site opened in separate tabs allows you to flip back and forth to monitor class progress as needed.

6- Focus student responses by reminding them that although this is a different way to learn and discuss information, it is still an academic activity. Jot reminders on the board or make reminder cards for them to keep on their desk with the following:

- This is a scholarly discussion.
- Use the relevant mathematical vocabulary as often as you can.
- Follow rules of grammar, mechanics, and spelling, as best you
- Answer every task to the best of your ability.

7- Adjust pacing to provide time for reflection, correction, and discussion. Depending on the activity, there are a variety of ways to use each activity. As the teacher, you can:

- Pause and have them analyze other students' work;
- Pause and discuss different components or aspects of the concept;
- Mix instruction and practice components into an activity;
- You can guide a portion of the lesson then have students complete the remainder as an in-class assignment or as homework.

There is a wide range of instructional strategies that you can use.

8- Peer tutors can also be helpful for some students who are less tech savvy. Consider organizing your room so students who have stronger math or tech skills are seated near those who might need some assistance.