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Grade 8 Numeracy
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Round Sheet

Background:

Over the past three weeks, students have been exploring the distributive property in numeracy class. The distributive property does a beautiful job of tying together topics they have learned earlier this year: positive and negative integers, order of operations, and combining like terms. Thus far, students have showed their thinking about the distributive property by using manipulatives, completing worksheets, solving real-world problems, and doing puzzles.

To prepare for a quiz next week on this material, students completed a packet on Monday that included a variety of review problems. I used their performance on the packets, as well as my knowledge of their progress over the past few weeks, to determine which students need help with which topics. Yesterday in class, each student was assigned a specific topic and then chose some sort of creative project through which they will more deeply engage in the material. Project options include creating a rap, a graphic novel, a poster, or a skit. Using their project, students must teach their classmates how to solve three problems within their given topic.

This particular group of students is very high-achieving in math, which I have noticed has conditioned them to expect all math to be easy. For many of them, however, the distributive property has not been so easy, which has led to obvious frustration and a lack of perseverance. With this in mind, I am hoping that this project allows students to not only review the material and deepen their understanding in anticipation of the upcoming quiz, but also explore their creativity and approach the math from a different lens.

Round Focus:

In today's class, students will begin to work on their projects. Students will be exploring five different topics: the distributive property, percentages, negative integers, order of operations, and times tables. They must first solve the three problems assigned to them, and then they can begin to figure out how to explain and teach them to their classmates. Since the students often resist explaining their math work, and some even resist showing work in general, this project is intentionally designed to force them to do so. While I usually have the students work in pairs or small groups, this time I let them choose their own groups and gave them the option to work alone. Most of the students chose to work alone, so I am interested to see how this affects their productivity and perseverance.

Learning-Centered Round Inquiry

1. Are students explaining and justifying each step of their mathematical work? Record evidence.

2. Record evidence of students asking each other for help. Do you notice this sort of collaboration within groups? Do you notice this sort of collaboration among students who are not in the same group or who are working alone?

3. Record evidence of off-task behavior. What are students doing when they are not working on the project? How, if at all, do they find their way back to the task?

Practice-Centered Round Inquiry

4. This project presents students with the biggest opportunity for choice and creativity thus far. Are students focusing on the creative aspect of the project more than the depth of their mathematical explanation? Record evidence.