

**Parent Course Guide**  
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## Parent Course Guide

### Materials Suggested for the Course

Having access to a computer, the internet and a printer is the most basic requirement for the course. But parents should consider adding the following materials to enhance your child's learning experience:

- Math textbook - great reference, good projects and extra topics, excellent used books online
- Scientific calculator
- Graph paper
- Three ring binder for notes

### Understanding How Your Child Learns

Take advantage of the fact that no one knows your child better than you, the parent. One of the most important traits you want to know about your child is their learning style. A learning style is nothing more than the learning process your child prefers or responds to best. For example, your child may prefer to learn in a step-by-step concrete manner or they may like to jump into a problem and try to figure it out. You want to determine if your child learns best when in a concrete or abstract setting and likes to order data in a logical or random manner.

Another facet of your child's learning that is important to discover is their primary intelligences. In teaching, this concept is called "multiple intelligences." These MI are nothing more than the areas that your child shows exceptional talent, skill or knowledge. You as the parent want to align learning activities to your child's learning style and multiple intelligences. A great resource to help you with these concepts is the book, *"How the Brain Learns"* from David A. Sousa.

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### Course Duration and Time Management

The TabletClass course has over 100 hours of instruction- that's a lot to cover! We suggest giving your child a full academic year on par to the September to June time frame. A good approach is to plan to spend an equal amount of time in each chapter. Parent and child can adjust the pacing of the course through the year depending on how your child progresses through the material.

### Course Routine

I strongly suggest that you follow the recommended schedule and routine until you are comfortable with the TabletClass system. Then feel free to make modifications that are most effective for you and your child.

## Instruction Routine:

- Allow 1-2 hrs total learning time per day; this includes homework
- Quiz at least twice per chapter
- Test at the end of each chapter
- Make sure the environment is quiet with minimal distraction
- Have a notebook and pencil ready to take notes
- Close all other software programs except internet explorer
- Log on to [www.tabletclass.com](http://www.tabletclass.com) and navigate to the section to be studied

**Task List:** Displays a "To Do" list to assist you in any manner that you desire

**My Pulse:** Complete list of videos you have viewed in chronological order and by confidence level

**Problem Overview:** Displays the problems to be worked in the section. It is recommended that you print the problems so you can work alongside with video presentations

**Play Video:** Click button to play video in player on right side of navigator

**Viewing Status:** The status and date when you last viewed the video.

**Task List:** Displays a "To Do" list to assist you in any manner that you desire

**Navigator:** Returns to the default navigator

**Confidence Level:** Changes the confidence level Filter

**Play Video:** Click button to play video in player on right side of navigator

**Viewing Status:** The status and date when you last viewed the video.

Video Info	Details	Play Video
Inequalities	Complete	A
Linear Inequalities Lesson	7/11/2007	
Systems	Complete	A
Linear Programming Example Set C	4/29/2007	
Solving Equations	Complete	A
Solving Two Step Equations Example Set A	4/7/2007	
Introduction to Algebra Terms and Concepts	Started	A
Variables Example Set A	3/18/2007	
Graphing Linear Equations XY Intercept Method (Ax + By=C) Example Set B	Started	A
3/16/2007		
Graphing Linear Equations XY Intercept Method (Ax + By=C) Example Set C	Started	A
3/16/2007		

Students should always start by watching the lesson video and pausing video during the lesson to take notes. Additionally, make sure your child enters how well they understood the lesson in the *Student Journal* (image below). This is essential for using the *My Pulse* (image above) skill tracker.

**Last Viewed**  
Change the Date as required

Image indicates that the video is available for download to your portable media device

**Status**  
Started - Default  
Re-Visit - Your marker to go review the video again.  
Complete - You don't feel you need to view the video again.

**Confidence level:**  
This is totally based on your confidence with the video material. Use the following guidance:  
**A:** You can do all problems with no help  
**B:** You can do most problems but have trouble with some.  
**C:** You understand but find it hard to do problems.  
**D:** You think you can do better but can't do the problems  
**F:** Lost

**Student Journal**

Status	Last Viewed	Confidence Level
Complete	03/15/2007	A

Update

Download Link

Video player: /videos/2/Alq1EquationsOneStepEXA.amv

You may desire to print the chapter review notes (last section in chapter) to supplement the notes taken during the lesson. However, it's important that the student learn to take their own notes, this is a critical study skill needed for college.

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### Practice/Homework Routine:

Upon completion of the section lesson video students should proceed to the respective example sets in the sections for practice.

Start by printing the first example set preview - the "Example Set A" problems. The student should attempt to do the first problem in the example set and watch the respective example set video to check for understanding. It's important that the student model the process of writing out all the steps as illustrated in the video. Continue this process to complete the first example set. If the student is having difficulty, refer to notes or watch the lesson video again.

Next, print the second example set, "Example Set B" - students should complete all the problems using the same process as above.

Finish all example set problems in the same manner before moving onto next section.

Finally, if the student finishes early consider extra problems from sections and videos that they indicated having low confidence using the *My Pulse* navigator. If the student is strong in all areas then you may want to start them on the next section.

- Homework

Practice is a must when mastering the skills of mathematics. Sometimes students will watch a lesson and understand the concepts - this is great if it does not lead to over confidence. The problems in the example sets have been designed to practice the variety of applications that the lesson taught. It's important that you schedule enough time for your child to finish all the problems in the example sets for the section.

- Projects and Extension Work

There are vast projects and extra work that can benefit learning. My suggestions for you, the parent, is to tap into your child's interests to motivate them to explore "real world" applications of mathematics. Projects and extra work can be found all over the internet and in math textbooks. A good place to start is to search the internet for "math web quest" for the topic or concept being explored; you will be surprised by the wealth of projects available online. Word problems are also important extension activities that you want your child to be comfortable doing. Lastly, always encourage project topics that have meaning to your child, this will enhance long term retention of concepts.

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## Testing

One of the most subjective areas of education is testing. The goal of any good assessment should be to check for understanding. How you, as the parent, decide to accomplish this task can vary widely. But the overarching objective of any test should always be the determination of the depth of knowledge and comprehension gained by your child.

Teachers have been trained to use "[Bloom's Taxonomy](#)" to determine how well a child has learned a concept. Basically, Bloom's Taxonomy suggests that a child needs to be taught and tested by increasing the level of complexity and difficulty. These levels of mental operations are as follows:

- **Knowledge** - has your child remembered rote information?
- **Comprehension** - do they have an understanding of this rote knowledge?
- **Application** - can they use what they learned in different situations/problems?
- **Analysis** - can they break a concept down into smaller parts and analyze?
- **Synthesis** - can they couple concepts and ideas together?
- **Evaluation** - can they make a logical and intelligent judgment using various concepts?

As a parent you want to use the above guidelines to assess your child. Here are some suggestions to obtaining and using testing material.

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### **Suggested Elements of Testing:**

- Tests/Quizzes(quiz twice per chapter/ test at end of chapter) - use TabletClass example set problems, math textbooks, math worksheets found online or other curriculum material. Also, add questions on chapters that have been covered- this will help gauge how well your child is retaining the material.
- Projects (once every 2-4 chapters) - use projects like web quests, math textbook word problems, or create your own project.
- The TabletClass *My Pulse* navigator - specially designed to keep track of your child's confidence and abilities by the skill set they learn in every video. This is a very powerful and unique tool that TabletClass offers students. It is a truly effective method of organizing and ranking all the skills the child has learned. This is a major time saver and can quickly direct and show you where your child's strengths and weaknesses are at anytime. Please take full advantage of this TabletClass feature to keep working on and improving your child's weaker skills. (Explained in detail in the [Instruction Routine](#) section of this guide.)

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## Grading

Assigning your child a grade is not black and white- it will be subjective to some degree. The following tips will help you build confidence that you are assigning your child the right grade.

### Grading Criteria:

- ☑ Chapter Tests - should account for 50%-60% of the grade
- ☑ Quizzes - should account for 15%-25% of the grade
- ☑ Homework - should account for 5%-15% of the grade
- ☑ Projects - should account for 10%-20% of the grade
- ☑ Midterms and Final Exams - optional; consider making 5%-15% of grade

### Use the following letter grade scale:

**A+ (97%-100%)**

**A (92%-96%)**

**A- (90%-91%)**

**B+ (87%-88%)**

**B (83%-86%)**

**B- (80%-82%)**

**C+ (77%-78%)**

**C (73%-76%)**

**C- (70%-72%)**

**D 60%-69%**

**59% or less fails**

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### **Guidelines/Suggestions:**

- Assign quarter grades
- Semester grades should be the average of the quarter grades
- Course grade should be the average of all four quarter grades
- Final exams can be used to offset earlier poor grades
- Do consider re-testing if a child fails a test
- Do give partial credit for questions that child shows understanding - be careful not to inflate the test score. The final percentage must make sense and be a fair representation of their performance.
- Do give "pop" or unannounced quizzes
- Tell your child at least a week in advance of a test
- Quizzes should last 10min – 20min: 3-10 problems
- Tests should last 45min – 60min: 20-30 problems
- Allow calculators but require that your child show and write out all work
- Pencil only; makes sure your child has enough scrap paper
- Give 1-3 weeks for projects; check progress before due dates
- Keep all tests and quizzes for your records; throw away homework after checking (keep some samples for a portfolio)

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### **Creating a Portfolio for your Child**

Portfolios can be thought of as resumes. The value of a good portfolio should not be overlooked. A few of the benefits to creating a student portfolio are:

- Having a record of assignments to look for trends in performance
- Showcase the best work and projects especially where the child improved
- An excellent source to justify grade

The portfolio should include, but not be limited to the following:

- All chapter tests
- Samples of quizzes; best and worse
- Samples of homework; best and worse
- All projects

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## Avoiding Common Mistakes and Instilling Good Habits

Experience is the best teacher. As such I want to share with you lessons that I have learned over the years when it comes to teaching young people mathematics. Knowing what to look for in your child's math work can help you encourage good habits and correct common problems.

### Areas to pay special attention to:

Fractions: many young people have trouble with fractions. It's an absolute must that your child understands fractions and their respective operations. Often students ignore fractions because they have a calculator—don't fall into this trap! If you're weak in fractions you will have a difficult time with algebra.

Integers: students that have not mastered working with the positive and negative numbers to include integers will not be successful in algebra. Once again, don't let your child rely on a calculator- they need to know the rules of integers.

Order of Operations: often, many students have a false sense of security that they are following the proper order of operations when simplifying a numeric expression. Weakness in this area if not corrected early will undermine success in algebra. So, please ensure that your child understands and thoroughly practices the order of operations.

Distributive Property: many students tend to make distributive property errors especially when solving equations. If you see a pattern of not correctly applying the distributive property in your child's work it is imperative that you go back and review the distributive property section until the skill is mastered.

Neatness: mathematics is a language and to clearly understand what we are saying in math it's vital that we write out steps in a neat and orderly manner. Again, students tend to get over confident in thinking that writing out each step is a waste of time only to find out that they made an error that could have been caught if they had carefully written out the steps (I called this the, "I knew that" mistake). To instill neatness and logic in problem solving, have students model their work to the steps shown in the videos.

Pencil not pen: no one writes out all the steps in math perfectly the first time so you must be prepared to erase mistakes. This seems obvious, but many students like to work in pen and their work gets messy fast; if your child likes using a pen insist on using a pencil.

Enough space: another tendency students have is that they like to conserve space on their paper. This noble conservation unfortunately leads to crowded work that does not show all the steps of a problem solving process. Avoid this tendency by encouraging your child to use whatever amount of paper it takes to show all the steps. Also, if your child writes very small try to encourage them to write a bit larger so they can see all their work clearly.

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