

DESMOS

Introductory Guide for Middle School Teachers

Presented by: Sara B. Vaughn

Statements and opinions are my own. I have no ties to Desmos except that I am a regular user of the products and services they provide.

Desmos is FREE!!

The folks at Desmos are committed to keeping Desmos free for teachers and kids. They are totally committed to better math education for all.

How do you start?

Explore the calculator feature at <https://www.desmos.com/> and start graphing. Sixth graders can graph ordered pairs and eight graders can graph a line. This is the most basic level for users. You should see what students create with it! This graphing calculator is so amazing. I have my students install it on their phones and set up student accounts so their work is preserved. There are four function and scientific calculators now available!

NCCTM
Middle School
Teacher
Desmos
Intro Training

teacher.desmos.com

When you get home, you will need an account. If you are learning on your own, check out learn.desmos.com. These resources are updated and improved continuously.

Classroom Activities

Use “Classroom Activities” to access formative assessment activities for your students. Use the Activity Builder (then go to “Custom” then “New Activity”) to create learning explorations for your students. If creating your own activities is too much to take on at first, have no fear. There are many quality activities just waiting for you to use without building your own. We will go through the basics of each section currently available on Classroom Activities, and then summarize how to use each sections with middle schoolers.



Your Activities



Teacher Dashboard

As a math teacher, you know how important developing mathematical discourse is with your students. The teacher dashboard was designed with this in mind. You can pace your students, pause your students, and even anonymize your students, all with the click of a button.

Custom

Activities you have made through "Activity Builder" are here. You can copy an activity and rename it and then customize it for your class.

History

Until archived, any activities run with students remain here until teachers archive them. They are sorted by date, so teachers may review and reflect on what students have done.

Bookmarked

Like an activity you tried out? Bookmark it for future use.

Custom Activity BANKS not vetted by Desmos staff or me:

<http://bit.ly/Desmosbank>

<http://bit.ly/desmoscardsortbank>

<http://bit.ly/megamsdes>

Students—access today's activity at student.desmos.com Class code: SB73B

Teachers — do this NOW or later on your devices.

Activities for middle school teachers are found at teacher.desmos.com, featured in our session today:

Card sorts: <http://learn.desmos.com/cardsort/> When you do your first custom activity for your class, I recommend a card sort. This is a great formative assessment tool and a nice way to identify common misconceptions about a topic.

Polygraph: Polygraph is a partner activity where students ask one another questions about a graph, equation, or function, to eliminate options based on the answers given by the other partners. Students' attention to detail and vocabulary makes this an extremely valuable learning tool.

Bundles: Vetting lessons and figuring out teaching sequences can be overwhelming because of access to so many different resources. The Desmos Team has handled most of that for teachers. Check out what's under "Bundles." There are sequenced lessons sorted by strand. Perfected activities are often sacrificed due to time constraints. No more! Thanks Desmos! More coming in "Bundles" soon.

Marble Slides: As students increase their understanding of functions, "Marble Slides" will lock in their understandings of transformations, domain, range, and the sheer nature of function graphs. Warning: it is addictive! So FUN!!!

HINT: If you ever get lost in the teacher dashboard or just want to exit a class activity, click the light grey **desmos** logo discretely placed on each teacher screen.

