

MATH VOCABULARY

At each of these grade cycles, the following terms should be part of the students' working vocabularies. Source of the lists of words: ISBE. For more math resources from ISBE, go to ISBE.net.

By Third Grade

12 inches = 1 foot 12 months = 1 year 2-dimensional 3 feet = 1 yard 365 days = 1 year 366 days = 1 leap year 3-dimensional 52 weeks = 1 year 7 days = 1 week a.m. abbreviations for days and months about above addends addition (+) angle area average bar graph below between capacity cardinal numbers centimeter (cm) cents (50¢ or \$0.50) chance/chances change chart circle circle graph cone congruent coordinates corner cube cup	cylinder decimal diameter difference digit distance divisible division (÷, /, fraction bar) dollars (\$) dozen drawn to scale edge/edges equal equation estimate/estimation even/even number face/faces factor farthest figure flips folded foot/feet (ft) fraction gallon gram (g) graph greater greatest grid group height hexagon histogram horizontal hour	hundred impossible inch (in.) is equal to (=) kilogram (kg) is greater than (>) is less than (<) is not equal to (≠) kilometer (km) label least least likely length less than likely line line graph line of symmetry line segment long mass measure measurement meter (m) metric mile (mi) milligram (mg) milliliter (mL) millimeter (mm) minus month more than most most likely multiply/multiplication (X) nickel	non-standard unit number cube number line number pair number pattern number sentence octagon odd/odd number operation order ordered pair (x, y) ordinal numbers ounce (oz) p.m. pair parallel parallelogram pattern pentagon perimeter pictograph pie graph pint place value plane figure plus point polygon possible pound (lb and #) prediction prism probability probable probably problem solving	product pyramid quadrilateral quart quarter quotient radius/radii ray reasonable rectangle rectangular prism rectangular pyramid represents results rhombus right angle round down round up same scale scale of numbers second segment set shape side/sides similar single size solid figure solve spent sphere spinner square square centimeters square pyramid	standard unit steps subtraction (–) sum survey symbol symmetry/symmetrical table tally tally chart temperature thousand time ton total trapezoid triangle triangular prism triangular pyramid true turns twice unit unknown unlikely value variable Venn diagram vertex/vertices vertical volume week (wk) weight wide width yard (yd)
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By Fifth Grade

acute angle	least common multiple
angle	liter (L)
approximately	lowest terms
arc	mean (arithmetic average)
base	median
bisect	midpoint
characteristic	miles per hour (mph)
chord	mode
circumference	multiple
column	multiply/multiplication (* or •)
combination	nonagon
composite number	<i>n</i> th term
congruent symbols in	obtuse angle
coordinate graph	order of operations
correspond	per
cubic units (3)	percent (%)
data	perpendicular
decimeter	pint (pt)
degrees (°)	polygons
degrees Celsius (°C)	portion
degrees Fahrenheit (°F)	prime number
diagonals	proportion
diagram	quart (qt)
dimensions	quotient
dividend	random
divisor	range
elapsed time	ratio (": or "to")
equilateral triangle	reflections
exactly	regular polygon
expression	right angle symbol
gallon (gal)	right triangle
greatest common factor	rotations
heptagon	row
intersect	scale drawing
intersecting lines	scalene triangle
irregular polygon	sequence
is approximately equal to (\approx)	slides
is congruent to (\cong)	square units (2)
is parallel to (\parallel)	stem-and-leaf plot
is perpendicular to (\perp)	time zone
is similar to (\sim)	ton (t)
isosceles triangle	triangle (Δ)
	value of

By Eighth Grade

adjacent	measure of angle
alternate exterior angles	minimum
alternate interior angles	odds
altitude	permutation
approximate	principle
ascend/ascending order	proportionally
axes	Pythagorean
commission	Theorem
complementary	quadrants
compound inequality	radical
consecutive	random
convert	rate
corresponding angles	real number
decagon	satisfy
descend/descending order	scattergram
discount	semi-circle
distinct	sequence
divisibility	simple interest
domain	skew
down payment	square root
earns	supplementary
factorial	surface area
foot (ft or ')	transversal
function	vertical angles
fundamental counting	x-axis
girth	y-axis
hypotenuse	
inch (in. or ")	
independent	
inequality	
is greater than or equal to (\geq)	
is less than or equal to (\leq)	
maximum	

Activity Projects to Make these Words Working Vocabularies

Students can sort these words into categories such as "operations" words and "size and shape" words. They also can use them as a check-list for their own math glossaries. Vocabulary from these lists should be included in explanations and in multiple choice and open-ended questions that students construct and take so they become confident math readers and writers. The words are cumulative, so students at upper grades should have a working knowledge of all the words on the tables. Students needing more assistance in learning these terms should learn them in context not as isolated words. Therefore, they should use them in sentences they write to explain what they mean with math examples they find or create.