

## Algebra 1 Course Syllabus – Brian Dobbs

KEEP THIS WITH YOU ALL YEAR – YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO KNOW THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS SYLLABUS

**Grade:** Daily assignments - and other class activities (35% of quarter grade)  
Tests (65% of quarter grade)  
**Semester Grade:** 1<sup>st</sup> quarter (40%), 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter(40%), and semester test(20%)  
*Extra Credit: is rare and minimal and only given at my discretion – never at a student’s request to save a suffering grade at the end of a term. There are bonus questions on some tests that give kids an opportunity to get some extra credit.*  
Students will be allowed to drop one test per semester. At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters, students will have to make a choice to either drop their lowest test or wait until the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, in which case I will automatically drop their lowest test. There are no retakes or redos on quizzes and tests! (with the exception of some IEPs)  
I update online grades once per week. Parents – I encourage you to check weekly. Just remember though – if I update on a Tuesday for example and your child turns something in the next day on Wednesday, it’s not going to show up online until the following week.  
1<sup>st</sup> quarter tends to be easy for most kids, but things gradually get more and more challenging as the year progresses. If you don’t get off to a solid start during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, things can “snow-ball” on you in a hurry. Parents – during the 1<sup>st</sup> qtr, if your child is getting below a C+ and/or is not turning in all assignments, that should be a red flag to you. Not doing assignments is where some kids really “do themselves in”.  
Kids that fail first semester are taken out of the class and will start over next year.  
Kids that pass first semester, but fail second semester will redo both semesters next year.  
That all being said, kids that work hard and are used to getting A’s and B’s typically do fine. I have numerous kids every year that get A’s. You just have to earn it.

### Make-Up Work

Daily work not turned in on the due date – you have a week to get half credit, after that it goes to a permanent zero.

If the late work is due to an absence – you have one week to get full credit, then another week to get half credit, then it goes to a permanent zero.

When you have missed class, do one or more of the following:

- 1) Get the notes from a friend.
- 2) Read and study the examples in the book.
- 3) Go to the textbook website and watch the Virtual Nerd video for the section you missed.

If you’ve tried **all** of the above first and are still having trouble, then see me for help.

**Materials Needed:** stores run out quickly in late August - if they don’t have what you need, keep trying every few days as the stores restock

- Pencil (mechanical strongly preferred)
- Eraser
- Red (or other bright color) pen – Not dark blue or black (all checking must be done in pen)
- Notebook – a spiral notebook of **graph paper** to be used only for notes – need one with 100 pgs to get you thru the semester – then get a new one for second semester
- Paper for assignments – everything should be done on **graph paper** (loose leaf or perforated notebook so edge is smooth to turn in) – this should be completely separate from your notes
- Folder or binder w/ folders to store assignments (and notes?) (notes and assignments should be saved until a semester is over)
- 6” or 12” Ruler (flexible clear plastic preferred)
- Scientific calculator (TI-30X IIS, TI-34 II, TI-30XS Multiview, or TI-34 Multiview to give you some ideas – the exact type is not that big a deal; Texas Instruments tend to be the best brand to go with); should be able to find at Walmart for \$20 or less; **a good calculator is an absolute must!**

## Daily Assignments:

Paper Heading: First and Last Name  
Class Period  
Assignment Number  
Page and Problems assigned

### Assignment Requirements:

Work vertically  
Work in Pencil  
Check in Pen  
Score at the top  
Neat and legible  
Rough edges torn off  
SHOW WORK! (90+% of what you do this year will involve showing work)  
-show your work with your answer on the paper you turn in (not on a separate sheet of paper)  
-if there was work in the notes, there should be work on the assignment (use your notes as a guide to determine what kind of work should be shown)

Students will check their own answers from a screen projection each day in class, calculate their score, and will then turn in to me to be spot checked and entered into the gradebook.

Spot checking means I don't see everything every day. You may get penalized sometimes, but not others. But put a solid honest effort into every assignment, or you will pay a price on the tests.

Students with low test scores and/or a history of poor quality daily assignments will likely have their papers spot checked more thoroughly.

I may make deductions from the score for things such as lack of work or dishonesty in checking answers.

Parents – if your child is getting good scores on daily work, but not doing well on tests – that might indicate dishonesty on the daily work. This is a trap that students need to avoid falling into – thinking they can “get by” by cheating on the daily work, but forgetting that the tests account for 2/3 (the bulk) of their grade. With smart phones, it is common for kids to take pictures of homework and share it thru their phones. Doing this, however, is a path to failure.

## Other items:

\*\*\*PHONES – not allowed in the room . Phones in the room will be confiscated.

Studying for a test:

- We will always have a review day before a test. Students should have and use their notes to look things up they've forgotten as they work through the review.
- Some tests will be open book and open note, but students should always prepare for tests as if they will not be open book/note because I usually do not announce in advance of the test whether it will be open book/note or not.
- If just doing the review assignment is not getting the kind of test scores you want, you should spend some extra time studying by going through the sections the test will cover and practicing on scratch paper some problems from the assignments you've had.

Some general keys to success:

- Good attendance
- Take and save notes
- Quality Daily Work (Show Work! – I'm picky about this even 1<sup>st</sup> qtr when things are easy – to make sure you're well prepared when things get hard)
- Save Assignments until you take the unit test
- Ask questions
- Study for tests