

# Mistake Mondays Teacher Guide

## Goal of Lesson

Teach students that it is okay to make mistakes. In fact, making mistakes in math can be a critical step to learning how to solve problems.

## Prep Required

- Choose a math problem that will help students review of a concept with which they have been struggling. Be ready to write it or project it on the board in front of the class.

## Introduction to Students

- Every Monday, start class by reviewing a problem from last week's homework. Let the students know that you will intentionally make a mistake, and when you do, they must be silent and write it down.
- Make an error as you solve the problem and students silently watch.
- Give students one or two minutes, and then ask them to turn to a (pre-assigned!) classmate and explain where they think the mistake was made.
- Then, ask the whole class for a volunteer to explain where the mistake was made.

### Ask:

- How would you solve differently?
- Are there any other ways you might solve this problem?  
(until the class runs out of ways to solve the problem.)
- **Optional:** Read an article we love: **"Never Say Anything a Kid Can Say!"** by Steven Reinhart.

## Throughout Lesson

We love this activity because you can accomplish many goals in one simple task:

1. Review math
2. Model problem-solving
3. Model that it is *okay to make mistakes* and *mistakes are learning opportunities*.
4. Engage students in mathematical discussions by asking them to explain their reasoning.

**Student Materials:** Paper and pen or pencil.

## Wrap Up

You can lead a whole group discussion and ask students:

- What does it mean if you make a mistake?
- What will you do next time you make a mistake in math?

We suggest the following protocol for students (from Jamie Lang's C3B4Me):

1. Use a hint.
2. Use a video.
3. Ask a buddy: "How did you solve this problem?"
4. If you still need help, ask your teacher.

Have students review mistakes after they submit an assignment and write a reflection on what they might try next time they solve a similar problem. (See **My Favorite Mistake activity**.)