

A Study of Written Communication: Showing Your Steps

Abstract

In this action research study of my teaching of sixth grade mathematics, I investigated the importance of showing work on daily assignments. I wanted to find out what happens when I ask students to show their work, specifically, whether it would improve students' grades or not and whether I could help the students to understand the importance of showing their work. I discovered that students need to be shown the proper way to show their work, how to look at a problem and then how to show all of their steps to get to the answer. They need to be encouraged and be held accountable for showing their work when asked. Once they were able to show work, they could start to see the value in showing their work and they tended to show their work more often. Students became more confident in themselves as mathematics students and, in some cases, their grades improved. As a result of this research, I plan to teach and explain to my future classes about how showing their work can benefit them in a variety of ways. They will be able to use the knowledge that they gain in my classroom in their future math classes in middle and high school.