

Error Analysis Folders

Promoting Learning, Organization, and Accountability

By Mark Tully, Published 11/15/2006

What is an Error Analysis Folder?

An Error Analysis Folder is simply a two-pocket folder that students use to record and organize their math quizzes and tests that have been corrected and signed by a parent. I first witnessed the power of Error Analysis Folders a few years ago on a visit to another middle school. I have adapted the basic idea of such a folder in order to meet my needs and those of my students and their parents. I require students to correct each math quiz or test that they take and to have each one signed by a parent. Students then use a recording sheet to keep track of their corrected assessments.

Learn From Your Mistakes

Too often the learning process ceases after the end of the unit assessment. The chapter test is widely considered (at least subconsciously) as the end of the learning in that topic of study. However, if a student misses a number of problems on a quiz or test, it becomes clear that additional work or study would be beneficial. Correcting any incorrect problems on a quiz or test gives students the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and, it is hoped, to not repeat these same mistakes in the future.

I have students do their corrections on the back of the assessment. They are not allowed to write on or modify their original assessment as I want to be able to review their work if necessary. Students are also required to show all work on their corrections and to write a sentence explaining why they missed each problem. These policies help to ensure that learning takes place and that students don't simply ask another student for an answer.

An Organized Portfolio

Students use a record sheet (see page 2) to itemize their quizzes and tests. They fill out the name of each assessment and the date the assessment was taken. The record sheet is kept on the left side of the folder and the assessments are kept in the right-hand pocket, with the most recent assessment on the top.

After an assessment has been corrected and signed by a parent, the student shows it to another student in the class. This checker signs the Error Analysis Folder Record Sheet only after verifying the completed corrections and parent signature. A final column allows the teacher to initial the record sheet when he evaluates the folder. I generally check the folders about once each quarter.

Error Analysis Folders are kept in a file crate in the front of the room and the students are required to file their assessments and update their folders as their quizzes and tests are returned to them. These folders can come in quite handy during parent-teacher conferences as they bring together all of the students assessments.

Student Accountability

Error Analysis Folders can be used to hold students accountable for learning from their mistakes. Students are also accountable for getting their assessments signed by a parent, verified by another student, and finally, checked by the teacher. This accountability promotes students' learning and helps them to take responsibility for their classroom performance in math.

Try It!

I have used Error Analysis Folders for a few years now. I highly value the learning, organization, and accountability that are promoted by this simple tool. Try it! You may like it too!

*Mark Tully is the founder of www.DigitalLesson.com. His website offers math lesson, project, and game downloads, free printable math games, the free **Middle School Math Treasures** e-newsletter, and many other resources for the middle school math teacher. Mark has taught middle school math for nearly 20 years.*

Math Assessments
Error Analysis Folder
Record Sheet

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Student Signature</u> (when corrected)	<u>Teacher Initials</u> (corrected)
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____	_____
9. _____	_____	_____	_____
10. _____	_____	_____	_____
11. _____	_____	_____	_____
12. _____	_____	_____	_____
13. _____	_____	_____	_____
14. _____	_____	_____	_____
15. _____	_____	_____	_____
16. _____	_____	_____	_____
17. _____	_____	_____	_____
18. _____	_____	_____	_____
19. _____	_____	_____	_____
20. _____	_____	_____	_____
21. _____	_____	_____	_____
22. _____	_____	_____	_____
23. _____	_____	_____	_____
24. _____	_____	_____	_____
25. _____	_____	_____	_____
26. _____	_____	_____	_____
27. _____	_____	_____	_____