3.17: More Tutorial Essentials
Tutorial Question Analysis
Identifying the Point of Confusion

Steps

1. Identify an academic class in which you are struggling, and select a question from the class.

2. Using this question, write down specific academic vocabulary and definitions.

3. Record any prior knowledge you have about the question.

4. Start solving the question and complete as much as you know how to do on your own.

5. Identify the point of confusion where you are no longer able to move forward toward an answer and create a specific question from this point.

6. During tutorials, your group members will ask you specific questions about your point of confusion rather than addressing your original question. See the examples below.

Example 1

- Original question from textbook/handout/quiz/test: Solve $x^2 - 3x - 4 = 0$ using the quadratic formula.

- Your initial tutorial question: How do I solve $x^2 - 3x - 4 = 0$?

- Identify what you know and can do: I know that if the discriminant is positive, the equation has two solutions; if negative, no real solution; if 0, one solution.

- New tutorial question (based on point of confusion): How do I find the value of the solution to determine how many solutions the equation has (2, 1, or no real)?

Example 2

- Original question from textbook/handout/quiz/test: Solve using the substitution method $4x + 3y = 16$ and $2x - 3y = 8$.

- Your initial tutorial question: How do I solve $4x + 3y = 16$ and $2x - 3y = 8$?

- Identify what you know and can do: I know how to substitute a number for x.

- New tutorial question (based on point of confusion): How do I solve one of the equations and substitute into the second equation to find an ordered pair solution?

Example 3

- Original question from textbook/handout/quiz/test: Simplify $\sqrt{9x^4}$?

- Your initial tutorial question: How do I simplify $\sqrt{9x^4}$?

- Identify what you know and can do: I know how to find $\sqrt{9}$, which would be 3.

- New tutorial question (based on point of confusion): How do I find the square root of an expression containing numbers and variable such as $\sqrt{9x^4}$?

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Your Turn

Directions: Revise and rewrite your tutorial questions to prompt members of your group to ask questions that specifically address your point of confusion.

Initial question from textbook/handout/quiz/test:

Academic vocabulary and definitions:

Identify what you know and can do:

New tutorial question based on point of confusion:

Initial question from textbook/handout/quiz/test:

Academic vocabulary and definitions:

Identify what you know and can do:

New tutorial question based on point of confusion:

Reflection: How did this activity help me write better questions that lead to a more effective tutorial?