

# Algebra I

## Course Syllabus

### Course Description:

This course is intended to draw together all of a student's previous mathematical knowledge into a formal method of thought and usage. Algebra teaches students to apply a set of rules to complex problems in order to simplify a hidden solution. Mastery of Algebra benefits students in the areas of mathematical competence, individual intelligence, and personal confidence. A thorough understanding of basic Algebra is a requirement in the pursuit of any high school or college level math work. Algebra is a graduation requirement at West Salem High School and is one of the prerequisites in Oregon's University System. Algebra places the power of the world of numbers in a student's hand and adds to a student's intelligence the benefit of organized thought. Algebra effects the way that students view and deal with challenges, breaking the complex into simpler pieces. Mastery of Algebra results in a better prepared, smarter, and more self-assured person.

### Text/Materials:

CPM Core Connections / CCSSM Supplemental Booklets

(Provided) *Connections Series* (and Supplements)  
Arithmetic in-class calculators

(Required) 1 - slim college-ruled spiral notebook  
1 - hole-punched ruler/straight edge  
pencils, calculator, erasers, and paper

(Suggested) 1 - Scientific/Graphing Calculator  
1 - pack of graph paper  
mechanical pencils

It is my expectation that every student come prepared for class. There is never a good reason for a student to come to class without something to write with or something to write on. It is not permissible for students to arrive expecting others to provide basic required materials.

### Grading Scale:

Daily Work / Notes / Homework:	25%	A	90% and up
Proficiency Quizzes / Final:	70%	B	80% to 90%
Participation:	5%	C	70% to 80%
		D	60% to 70%
		F	below 60%

### Proficiency Grading:

Algebra I will be graded, primarily, by proficiency throughout the Fall and Spring Semesters. Students will be unable to pass without showing significant knowledge and a minimal basic mastery of course standards. Each standard will be tested three times, for all students (and a fourth as necessary), throughout the semester. The quizzes are useful as a measurement, but they also direct the focus of practice. Quizzes are short, but valuable for each student. The standards allow each student to know where they stand, where they are strong or weak. This gives students a maximized advantage to build up weaker areas of understanding. Additionally, no student will suffer a significant loss of their grade for one or two weak test performances.

**Daily Work:**

Daily Work, making up 25% of every student's grade, includes in-class activities, homework, and several possible brief projects or work samples. Daily work encompasses the whole of a student's practice. Students who practice well tend to test well and virtually always pass. It is not possible to pass this class only doing daily work just as it is not possible to pass this class well doing no daily work.

Generally speaking, homework is passed out on the first day of the week and collected on the last day of the week. Homework items are chosen according to what will be the most useful practice for the class at that time. Homework assignments are large enough that they are inconvenient to do in a single evening or in one sitting. Since only one is assigned each week, time should be budgeted. Homework is valuable to the extent that it usually means a letter grade for most students.

**Quizzes:**

Proficiency Quizzes make up the largest share of every student's grade. The quizzes serve as a replacement for chapter test but also serve the needs of improving students, repeatedly testing over class standards. Each standard will make up *about* 10% of the semester grade including the standard's presence on the Final.

**Semester Final:**

For both semesters, the final will be a single objective test, coming directly from the standards.

**Participation:**

Participation includes criteria such as attendance, involvement in class, preparedness, punctuality, following directions, and note-taking in the prescribed format. While good behavior accentuates a student's participation grade, it will not make the grade alone. When time allows, students will receive the benefit of class time for homework, this time must not be wasted.

**Notes:**

Each student will keep a thin spiral notebook for the purpose of taking and referring to notes. The spiral notebooks will usually reside in the classroom, though students may occasionally take them home. Notes will be taken about once a week. The format of the notes is similar to the Cornell style and is graded. Students can use their notes for any assignment or test in this class. Generally, students who take good notes also score well on quizzes.

The spiral cannot serve as a source of paper. The usual seventy-page spiral is perfect for class notes but wholly inadequate for a day-by-day supply of notebook paper.

Grading for notes will be integrated into the "daily work" grade category this year.

**Extra Credit:**

Extra credit will be offered periodically. Extra credit points add to the "daily work" total and can raise the grade over 100%, though this is difficult by the end of the semester.

**Classroom Procedures:**

The procedures and routines are meant for order (for the class as a whole), and for success (for students individually). As a class, our goal is for every student to pass and for each student to pass with their highest potential level of accomplishment.

- Rule #1      *Students must come to class everyday, dressed appropriately, on-time, and prepared to work.*
- Rule #2      *Students must show respect for their instructor, their classmates, their time, their work space, and for themselves.*
- Rule #3      *Students must turn in their own class work everyday.*
- Rule #4      *Students must abstain from using electronic devices, napping, or wearing hats in class.*
- Rule #5      *Students must not use vulgarity or profanity in writing or verbally.*

**Make-up Work:**

Homework is listed on the board and handed out in class. Homework is eligible for partial diminishing credit upon completion through the end of the grading period. Classwork is given and collected daily. While in-class work is never accepted late, it will be excused if the absence is excused. Any absence may be excused by the attendance office or by a parent/legal guardian. Work missed due to un-excused absences may not be eligible for make up. Late work is never acceptable after the end of a grading period.

**Hall Passes:**

I will always allow students out of the classroom when they need to leave (meaning sickness or needing to go potty) or are summoned by the office. Hall passes will usually be given one at a time. If abused, this allowance may be revisited on an individual basis.

**Dishonesty:**

Within the nature of group-work, sharing ideas and helping each other is desirable. Nonetheless, work is not to be copied. Students will not copy homework and will not share or communicate on tests. Both the copier and the copied cheat when students copy work they did not do. In the incidence of academic dishonesty, credit will not be given for the assignment, parents/guardians may be contacted, and official action may be taken.

**Contraband:**

Students should be aware that as they are in school, they should not come to class expecting to be able to use cell-phones, music devices, radios, game systems, DVD Players, playing cards, or any other form of distraction. I will ask that such items be put away and kept away. Failing to comply will result first in warning and then in confiscation for the period. If necessary the device will go to the student center for parent pick up. Food/Drink privileges also may be revoked based on a class's conduct.