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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Math Anxiety Self-Assessment and Autobiography**

**What to do:** Use this self-assessment to have students and staff members gauge their levels of math anxiety. For each question, circle the level of agreement. Then add up the circle numbers to get the score. See the “Results” section to see what the score might mean. (If you’re using this self-assessment as an adult, think back to when you were a student.)

**Why it matters:** There are many benefits to self-assessment, including a better understanding of what triggers the anxiety, what motivates you to work through it, and discovering strategies that work for you to confront and overcome the anxiety.

**Reflection Guide**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Statement** | **Level of Agreement**  ***1 = Disagree 5 = Agree*** |
| 1. I cringe whenever it’s time for math class. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. I get the jitters if I have to go to the board in math class. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. I’m afraid to ask questions or ask for help in math. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. I constantly worry that the math teacher will call on me next. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. I’m pretty good at math, but I still worry about my abilities. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. I tend to zone out in math class. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. I fear math tests more than any other kind. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. I don’t know how to study for math tests. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Math is clear to me while in class, but when I go home it’s like I was never there. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I’m afraid I won’t be able to keep up with the rest of the class. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| **Score** *(total of all the numbers you circled)* |  |

| **Score Level of Math Anxiety** |
| --- |
| 40-50 — You have math anxiety. 11-19 — Math is smooth sailing for you. |
| 30-39 — You’re somewhat fearful about math. 10 — No math monsters in your closet! |
| 20-29 — Any fears you have are mostly under control. |
|  |

Follow these steps to help you process your self-assessment results and consider possible ways to reduce your math anxiety.

**Step 1: Write —** Use these sentence starters to write a short math autobiography:

* According to my math anxiety self-assessment, my level of math anxiety is:
* If you ask me how I feel about math, I’d use these words:
* Here’s what I think about my ability to learn math:
* A good experience I had with math (in school or elsewhere) was:
* A bad experience I had with math (in school or elsewhere) was:
* One way my feelings about math (positive or negative) affect my life is:
* Here’s what I think about my ability to learn math:

**Step 2: Reflect** **—** Use these questions to reflect on your math autobiography:

* Has the fear of math (or fear of making mistakes or failing a math class or test) held you back? If so, in what ways?
* What would you like to change about your relationship with math?

**Step 3: Discuss** **—** Talk with at least two other people about your math autobiographies. Tell each other which of these positive (and true!) messages about math you most need to hear, and which strategy you’d like to try.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Which message about math ability do you most need to hear?** | **Which anxiety management strategy do you want to try?** |
| * Effort and persistence matter more than natural ability when it comes to learning math. * Boys and girls are equally capable of learning math. * There are many ways to be good at math. * You can be good at math even if you have trouble memorizing math facts, rules, and formulas. * Faster isn’t smarter (but mental math shortcuts are handy). * Mistakes are learning opportunities. | * Breathing techniques * Progressive muscle relaxation * Walking meditation * S.T.O.P. (**S**top, **T**ake a breath, **O**bserve, **P**roceed) * Self-talk (be your own coach) * Write it out (to “unload” your worries and concerns) * Pomodoro Method (to beat procrastination caused by anxiety, work 25 minutes, break for 5 minutes) |

*The fears we don’t face become our limits.* — Robin Sharma

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