



Subject: Math

Grade Level: Elementary School

DI Strategy: Tiered Scaffold

Positive and Negative Numbers Tiered Assignment Lesson

In 5th grade math, we were discussing how to compare negative and positive numbers. This would then lead us into adding and subtracting negative numbers a few days later. It was essential for students to be able to compare integers before they could be expected to move on to adding or subtracting positive and negative numbers. Before lunch, I had students complete an entrance slip. This slip had students plot data on a number line that included both positive and negative numbers. This entrance slip gave me some initial information about which students had some understanding, a full grasp, or little understanding of both positive and negative numbers. It provided me a quick snapshot of which students to monitor during the mini-lesson. After lunch, we engaged in a mini-lesson about negative and positive numbers, using a number line to compare the numbers (greater than, less than, or equal).

As a result of the entrance slip and information from the gradual release throughout the lesson, I grouped students for the independent part of the lesson. One group worked independently to compare positive and negative numbers without the number line. This included whole numbers and fractions. Another group was working with the assistance of a number line to plot data (numbers) and compare the numbers. Finally, my last group (and smallest group) was working with me for a full reteach of plotting integers on a number line to compare numbers. My first two groups were able to work independently and self-check their work using an answer key. This was then followed up by an exit ticket to make sure they mastered the concept.

The smaller group worked with me at a much slower pace. I was able to identify that not only was there some hesitation with the actual concept of negative numbers, but there were some errors with computations that required regrouping during subtraction (demonstrated with the plotting data on a number line). By the end of the lesson, they were able to use a number line to compare numbers and determine greater than, less than, or equal to. One student was even able to progress to ordering a series of 6 numbers (including a fraction). Another student showed progress, but will remain in my reteaching group over the next few days in order to help her build up this skill.