

February 2010

Algebra Families,

We can't believe that it is almost February break! Here is a quick update:

Midterm – your students did quite well! We were very happy with the student's performance. The two areas that need a little more focus are solving absolute value equations and working with systems of linear equations. We will work on building these skills into skills time in the math 8 classes.

Since the Midterm, we have worked with Pythagorean Theorem, adding and subtracting polynomials, and properties of exponents (This fit in well with *Growing, growing, growing* – the CMP book from Math 8 about exponential relationships). Now we are focusing on multiplying binomials which will lead into factoring trinomials. Remember FOIL? That is not the main method that we will focus on. We are learning through using an area model.

**Multiplying Polynomials**

$(x + 1)(x + 2)$

Fill in the internal grid with tiles. Be sure that straight lines are maintained within the grid at all times.

Answer will be the sum of the elements within the grid.

$x^2 + 3x + 2$

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**Multiplying Polynomials**

$(x - 2)(x + 3)$

Remember that a negative value times a positive value gives a negative result.

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**Multiplying Polynomials**

$(x - 2)(x + 3)$

Remember that a negative value times a positive value gives a negative result.

Answer in the grid

$x^2 + x - 6$

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And then we will connect it to the distributive property, since we can use that method in most situations. This background will connect to the Math 8 book – *Frogs, Fleas and Painted Cubes* – Quadratic Relationships. During this next unit we will look at the connections between the graphs, tables and equations of quadratic function.

We look forward to continue sharing and learning with your students.

Thank You,

Kathleen Legg and Janet Watts