



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2004 Volume V: The Craft of Word Problems

Do the Math 100%

Guide for Curriculum Unit 04.05.09
by Susan Gudas

Most students have a difficult time with word problems. Although they are able to compute reasonably well, their mathematical thinking skills and critical reading skills need fine-tuning.

This is a problem-solving unit involving various types of percent problems. Students will solve real-world word problems to explore percentage and its use in their everyday living. Hopefully it will make the math more engaging to them if the problems are designed to relate to events occurring in their lives. Strategies necessary for students to master in order to become better problem solvers are incorporated. The unit will include lessons in comparison/contrast, drawing conclusions, and predicting future results. Each activity will prompt students to calculate, interpret, apply and communicate math. The unit emphasizes their increased understanding of mathematical situations. The practice they will do with this unit will increase their ability to perform on the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) that will be taken in high school, as well as support student growth and improvement.

(Recommended for Mathematics and Algebra, grade 8.)

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