

# THE BLACKBOARD AS A TEACHING DEVICE

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Below are stated the different ways in which the blackboard may be used profitably:

1. After developing a process, the teacher gives the class a clear exposition in which she solves an exercise involving the process stating and writing on the board the steps of the process.

2. After the teacher has given an exposition of the process, she sends to the blackboard as many students as it can accommodate. Then the teacher dictates to the students at the board and to those at the seats a number of exercises involving the process with the aim in view to determining if it has been understood by the whole class.

3. At the beginning of the directed study the teacher sends to the blackboard as many students it can accommodate to write the solutions of the exercises assigned for homework. With the written work before her, she can easily identify those students who have difficulty and need further teaching. Passing from one student to another, she gives whatever help is needed. She identifies also the students at the seats who have trouble and give them the necessary assistance.

4. The blackboard may be used also in conducting rapid-fire drill. She sends to the blackboard as many students it can accommodate. As the teacher reads the exercises, one at a time, the students both at the blackboard and those at the seats solve them as rapidly as they can.

5. During the directed study or seat-work students may be sent to the board to write out solutions of problems which the class as a whole has been unable to solve. Sometimes several students may write their solutions on the board to illustrate different ways of solving the same problem. While these students are writing on the board, class study should not be interrupted, and it is not always necessary to have the solutions explained. The other students may examine them when they find it convenient to do so.

The following are the uneconomical blackboard procedures very often used by a number of mathematics teachers:

1. One often sees some of the students of a class working at the board while the others are waiting idly for them to finish because the teacher failed to give them something definite to do.

2. Another wasteful blackboard procedure which is very common is the sending of many students at one time to the board to solve problems which they explain later. This procedure is ineffective for the following reasons:

a. A student's explanation of a difficult problem is rarely satisfactory for those who failed to do it. Hence, the teacher, not the student, should be the one to explain the solution of the problem.

b. When the solution of a problem written on the board by a student is wrong another one is usually sent there to write his solution. This procedure involves much waste of time.

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