MATHEMATICS · GRADES 7-9

Monomials, binomials, and trinomials

Difficulty level: Intermediate

Mathematics: Grades 7-9

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Overview of the concept

This is how you name an expression by how many parts it has, like calling a two part expression a binomial, so you know what kind of maths to use on it. The name tells you at a glance how complicated the expression is and which rules are likely to apply to it. Knowing the names means you can follow a lesson or a textbook without getting lost, and you can tell a teacher or a classmate exactly what kind of expression you are working with.

Rule

Monomials, binomials, and trinomials: name an expression by how many terms it has. One term is a monomial, two terms is a binomial, and three terms is a trinomial. Four or more terms is a polynomial.

Count the terms, separated by plus or minus signs, then use the name that matches the count.

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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Classify $5x^2 + 3x + 1$

SOLUTION

Picture it

Classify $5x^2 + 3x + 1$

Work it one step at a time, top to bottom.

Count the terms: $5x^2$, $3x$ and 1, three terms

Three terms means a trinomial.

So $5x^2 + 3x + 1$ is a trinomial.

EXAMPLE 2

Q Classify $7x - 2$

SOLUTION

Picture it

Classify $7x - 2$

Work it one step at a time, top to bottom.

Count the terms: $7x$ and -2, two terms

Two terms means a binomial.

So $7x - 2$ is a binomial.

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Practice questions

1 Classify $4x$

- A Monomial
- B Binomial
- C Trinomial
- D Polynomial

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2 Classify $3x + 1$

- A Monomial
- B Binomial
- C Trinomial
- D Polynomial

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3

How many terms are in $x^2 + 2x + 1$? Name its type.

A Monomial

B Binomial

C Trinomial

D Polynomial

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4

$2a - 5b + 3c - 1$ has four terms. What is it called?

A Monomial

B Binomial

C Trinomial

D Polynomial

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5 Classify 9

- A Monomial
- B Binomial
- C Trinomial
- D Polynomial

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6 $x^3 - x$ has two terms. What is it called?

- A Monomial
- B Binomial
- C Trinomial
- D Polynomial

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7 Name the type of $4m + 2n + 6$.

- A Monomial
- B Binomial
- C Trinomial
- D Polynomial

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8 How many terms does $-7y$ have? What is it called?

- A Monomial
- B Binomial
- C Trinomial
- D Polynomial

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9

Classify $2x^2 - 3$

A Monomial

B Binomial

C Trinomial

D Polynomial

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10

$a + b + c$ has three terms. What is it called?

A Monomial

B Binomial

C Trinomial

D Polynomial

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ANSWER KEY

1. Monomial

2. Binomial

3. Trinomial

4. Polynomial

5. Monomial

6. Binomial

7. Trinomial

8. Monomial

9. Binomial

10. Trinomial

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