

Investigating Patterns Student Task

Adapted from *Generating Polynomials from Patterns* task, Mathematics Assessment Project: http://map.mathshell.org/download.php?fileid=1728

Look at the following pattern:

- 1. Draw the picture for n = 5 in the space above.
- 2. Describe the pattern in the **black** dots. You can use words, pictures, and/or mathematical expressions.
- 3. Describe the pattern in the **white** dots. You can use words, pictures, and/or mathematical expressions.
- 4. Describe the pattern in the **total** number of dots. You can use words, pictures, and/or mathematical expressions.
- 5. On your picture for n=5, circle the dots that are being modeled by the expression $n^2-(n-1)$.

Consider this pattern:

| n = 1 | n=2 | n=3 | n = 4 |
|-------------------------|---------|-----|-------|
| • 0 • 0 • 0 • 0 • | 0 • • 0 | | |

6. What could each of these expressions be modeling?

| a) 4 | |
|------------------|--|
| b) n^2 | |
| c) 4n | |
| d) $n^2 + 4$ | |
| e) $(n + 2)^2$ | |
| | |
| $(n^2 + 4) + 4n$ | |