



Chapter 3 Understand Your Students Well

This chapter resonated with me. I wish I had read this book when I started teaching. Hearing our students' math stories can help with instructional decisions.

Teachers must take the time to discover who their students are as people. Making assumptions continues fixed and stereotypical thinking which is often negative.

Understanding your students is an equity issue because when we get to know our students beyond the classroom – what motivates and intrigues them, you can use those topics in a math context and move away from stereotypes of marginalized students.

The impact of not understanding your students can lead teachers to think about marginalized students from a deficit standpoint, not their strengths. Teachers may misunderstand student behavior that leads to student disengagement and low achievement.

Discovering a student's math story, journaling, team-building activities, communication styles, and student interest surveys can be ways to begin understanding your students well. These are not one and done activities, they take time and effort from both the teacher and student.

Pam writes this much better than I am summarizing. I think it is worth your time to read and think about what improvements you can make in your instructional practice. I am looking forward to hearing and working with Pam in April at the 2024 MCTM Symposium and Conference in Duluth!



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