# PRE CALCULUS

## DOUBLE-NUMBERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

## A FRESH START CURRICULUM
## STARTING FROM SCRATCH

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## A FRESH START PRECALCULUS CURRICULUM

In their 'Principles and Standards for School Mathematics' (2000), the US National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, NCTM, identifies five standards: number and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement and data analysis and probability, saying that "Together, the standards describe the basic skills and understandings that students will need to function effectively in the twenty-first century (p. 2)." In the chapter 'Number and operations', the Council writes: "Number pervades all areas of mathematics. The other four content standards as well as all five process standards are grounded in number (p. 7)."

Their biological capacity to adapt to their environment make children develop a number-language allowing them to describe quantity with two-dimensional block- and bundle-numbers. Education could profit from this to teach children primary school calculus that adds blocks (Tarp, 2018). Instead, it imposes upon children one-dimensional line-numbers, claiming that numbers must be learned before they can be applied. Likewise, calculus must be learned before it can be applied to operate on the functions introduced at the precalculus level.

However, listening to the Ausubel (1968) advice "The most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. Ascertain this and teach him accordingly (p. vi).", we might want to return to the two-dimensional block-numbers that children brought to school.

So, let us face a number as 456 as what it really is, not a one-dimensional linear sequence of three digits obeying a place-value principle, but three two-dimensional blocks numbering unbundled singles, bundles, bundles-of-bundles, etc., as expressed in the number-formula, formally called a polynomial:

T = 456 = 4*B^2 + 5*B + 6*1, with ten as the international bundle-size, B.

This number-formula contains the four different ways to unite: addition, multiplication, repeated multiplication or power, and block-addition or integration. Which is precisely the core of traditional mathematics education, teaching addition and multiplication together with their reverse operations subtraction and division in primary school; and power and integration together with their reverse operations factor-finding (root), factor-counting (logarithm) and per-number-finding (differentiation) in secondary school.

Including the units, we see there can be only four ways to unite numbers: addition and multiplication unite changing and constant unit-numbers, and integration and power unite changing and constant 'double-numbers' or 'per-numbers'. We might call this beautiful simplicity 'the algebra square' inspired by the Arabic meaning of the word algebra, to re-unite.

| Operations **unite**/ *split* Totals in | Changing | Constant |
|---|---|---|
| Unit-numbers<br>m, s, kg, $ | **T = a + n**<br>$T - n = a$ | **T = a*n**<br>$\frac{T}{n} = a$ |
| Per-numbers<br>m/s, $/kg, $/100$ = % | **T = ∫ f dx**<br>$\frac{dT}{dx} = f$ | **T =** $a^b$<br>$\sqrt[b]{T} = a$ $\quad log_a(T) = b$ |

Figure 01. The 'algebra-square' has 4 ways to unite, and 5 to split totals

Looking at the algebra-square, we thus may define the core of a calculus course as adding and splitting into changing per-numbers, creating the operations integration and its reverse operation, differentiation. Likewise, we may define the core of a precalculus course as adding and splitting into constant per-numbers by creating the operation power, and its two reverse operations, root and logarithm.

**Precalculus, building on or rebuilding?**

In their publication, the NCTM writes “High school mathematics builds on the skills and understandings developed in the lower grades (p. 19).”

But why that, since in that case high school students will suffer from whatever lack of skills and understandings they may have from the lower grades?

Furthermore, what kind of mathematics has been taught? Was it ‘grounded mathematics’ abstracted ‘bottom-up’ from its outside roots as reflected by the original meaning of ‘geometry’ and ‘algebra’ meaning ‘earth-measuring’ in Greek and ‘re-uniting’ in Arabic? Or was it ‘ungrounded mathematics’ or ‘meta-matics’ exemplified ‘top-down’ from inside abstractions, and becoming ‘meta-matism’ if mixed with ‘mathe-matism’ (Tarp, 2018) true inside but seldom outside classrooms as when adding without units?

As to the concept ‘function’, Euler saw it as a bottom-up name abstracted from ‘standby calculations’ containing specified and unspecified numbers. Later meta-matics defined a function as an inside-inside top-down example of a subset in a set-product where first-component identity implies second-component identity. However, as in the word-language, a function may also be seen as an outside-inside bottom-up number-language sentence containing a subject, a verb and a predicate allowing a value to be predicted by a calculation (Tarp, 2018).

As to fractions, meta-matics defines them as quotient sets in a set-product created by the equivalence relation that (a,b) ~ (c,d) if cross multiplication holds, a*d = b*c. And they become mathe-matism when added without units so that 1/2 + 2/3 = 7/6 despite 1 red of 2 apples and 2 reds of 3 apples gives 3 reds of 5 apples and cannot give 7 reds of 6 apples. In short, outside the classroom, fractions are not numbers, but operators needing numbers to become numbers.

As to solving equations, meta-matics sees it as an example of a group operation applying the associative and commutative law as well as the neutral element and inverse elements, thus using five steps to solve the equation 2*u = 6, given that 1 is the neutral element under multiplication, and that ½ is the inverse element to 2:

2*u =6, so (2*u)*½ =6*½, so (u*2)*½ =3, so u*(2*½) =3, so u*1 =3, so u =3.

However, the equation 2*u = 6 can also be seen as recounting 6 in 2s using the recount-formula ‘T = (T/B)*B’ (Tarp, 2018) present all over mathematics as the proportionality formula thus solved in one step:

2*u = 6 = (6/2)*2, giving u = 6/2 = 3.

Thus, a lack of skills and understanding may be caused by being taught inside-inside meta-matism instead of grounded outside-inside mathematics.

**Using Sociological Imagination to Create a Paradigm Shift**

As a social institution, mathematics education might be inspired by sociological imagination, seen by Mills (1959) and Baumann (1990) as the core of sociology.

Thus, it might lead to shift in paradigm (Kuhn, 1962) if, as a number-language, mathematics would follow the communicative turn that took place in language education in the 1970s (Halliday, 1973; Widdowson, 1978) by prioritizing its connection to the outside world higher than its inside connection to its grammar.

So why not try designing a fresh-start precalculus curriculum that begins from scratch to allow students gain a new and fresh understanding of basic mathematics, and of the real power and beauty of mathematics, its ability as a number-language for modeling to provide an inside prediction for an outside situation? Therefore, let us try to design a precalculus curriculum through, and not before its outside use.

The text is taken from the paper 'The Same Mathematics Curriculum for Different Students' written for the ICMI Study 24, School Mathematics Curriculum Reforms: Challenges, Changes and Opportunities, held in Tsukuba, Japan, 26-30 November 2018.

Teaching material may be found in a compendium called 'Mathematics Predicts' (Tarp, 2009).

Allan Tarp, September 2019

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**GROUNDED OUTSIDE-INSIDE FRESH-START PRECALCULUS FROM SCRATCH**

Let students see that both the word-language and the number-language provide 'inside' descriptions of 'outside' things and actions by using full sentences with a subject, a verb, and an object or predicate, where a number-language sentence is called a formula connecting an outside total with an inside number or calculation, shortening 'the total is 2 3s' to 'T = 2*3';

Let students see how an outside degree of Many at first is iconized by an inside digit with as many strokes as it represents, five strokes in the 5-icon etc. Later the icons are reused when counting by bundling, which creates icons for the bundling operations as well. Here division iconizes a broom pushing away the bundles, where multiplication iconizes a lift stacking the bundles into a block and where subtraction iconizes a rope pulling away the block to look for unbundles ones, and where addition iconizes placing blocks next-to or on-top of each other.

Let students see how a letter like x is used as a placeholder for an unspecified number; and how a letter like f is used as a placeholder for an unspecified calculation. Writing 'y = f(x)' means that the y-number is found by specifying the x-number and the f-calculation. Thus, with x = 3, and with f(x) = 2+x, we get y = 2+3 = 5.

Let students see how calculations predict: how 2+3 predicts what happens when counting on 3 times from 2; how 2*5 predicts what happens when adding 2$ 5 times; how 1.02^5 predicts what happens when adding 2% 5 times; and how adding the areas 2*3 + 4*5 predicts adding the 'per-numbers' when asking '2kg at 3$/kg + 4kg at 5$/kg gives 6kg at how many $/kg?'

**Solving Equations by Moving to Opposite Side with Opposite Sign**

Let students see the subtraction 'u = 5-3' as the unknown number u that added with 3 gives 5, u+3 = 5, thus seeing an equation solved when the unknown is isolated by moving numbers 'to opposite side with opposite calculation sign'; a rule that applies also to the other reversed operations:

- the division u = 5/3 is the number u that multiplied with 3 gives 5, thus solving the equation u*3 = 5
- the root u = 3√5 is the factor u that applied 3 times gives 5, thus solving the equation u^3 = 5, and making root a 'factor-finder'
- the logarithm u = log3(5) is the number u of 3-factors that gives 5, thus solving the equation 3^u = 5, and making logarithm a 'factor-counter'.

Let students see multiple calculations reduce to a single calculation by unhiding 'hidden brackets' where 2+3*4 = 2+(3*4) since, with units, 2+3*4 = 2*1+3*4 = 2 1s + 3 4s.

This prevents solving the equation 2+3*u = 14 as 5*u = 14 with u = 14/5. Allowing to unhide the hidden bracket we get:

2+3*u = 14, so 2+(3*u) = 14, so 3*u = 14-2, so u = (14-2)/3, so u = 4

This solution is verified by testing: 2+3*u = 2+(3*u) = 2+(3*4) = 2+12 = 14.

Let students enjoy a 'Hymn to Equations': "Equations are the best we know, they're solved by isolation. But first the bracket must be placed, around multiplication. We change the sign and take away, and only u itself will stay. We just keep on moving, we never give up; so feed us equations, we don't want to stop!"

Let students build confidence in rephrasing sentences, also called transposing formulas or solving letter equations as e.g. T = a+b*c, T = a-b*c, T = a+b/c, T = a-b/c, T = (a+b)/c, T = (a-b)/c, etc. ; as well as formulas as e.g. T = a*b^c, T = a/b^c, T = a+b^c, T = (a-b)^c, T = (a*b)^c, T = (a/b)^c, etc.

Let students place two playing cards on-top with one turned a quarter round to observe the creation of two squares and two blocks with the areas u^2, b^2/4, and b/2*u twice if the cards have the lengths u and u+b/2. Which means that (u + b/2)^2 = u^2 + b*u + b^2/4. So, with a quadratic equation saying u^2 + b*u + c = 0, three terms disappear if adding and subtracting c:

(u + b/2)^2 = u^2 + b*u + b^2/4 = (u^2 + b*u + c) + b^2/4 – c = b^2/4 – c.

Moving to opposite side with opposite calculation sign, we get the solution

(u + b/2)^2 = b^2/4 – c, so u + b/2 = $\pm\sqrt{\text{b^2/4 – c}}$, so u = -b/2 $\pm\sqrt{\text{b^2/4 – c}}$

**Algebra and Geometry, Always Together, Never Apart**
Let students enjoy the power and beauty of integrating algebra and geometry.

First, let students enjoy seeing that multiplication creates blocks with areas where 3*7 is 3 7s that may be algebraically recounted in tens as 2.1 tens. Or, that may be geometrically transformed to a square u^2 giving the algebraic equation u^2 = 21, creating root as the reverse calculation to power, u = √21. Which may be found approximately by locating the nearest number p below u, here p = 4, so that u^2 = (4+t)^2 = 4^2 + 2*4*t + t^2 = 21.

Neglecting t^2 since t is less than 1, we get 4^2 + 2*4*t = 21, which gives t = $\frac{\text{21 – 4^2}}{4*2}$ , or t = $\frac{\text{N – p^2}}{p*2}$, if p is the nearest number below u, where u^2 = N.

As an approximation, we then get √N ≈ p + t = p + $\frac{\text{N – p^2}}{p*2}$

or √N ≈ $\frac{\text{N+ p^2}}{p*2}$, if p^2 < N < (p+1)^2

Then let students enjoy the power and beauty of predicting where a line geometrically intersects lines or circles or parabolas by algebraically solving two equations with two unknowns, also predicted by a computer software.

**Recounting Grounds Proportionality**
Let students see how recounting in another unit may be predicted by a recount-formula ‘T = (T/B)*B’ saying “From the total T, T/B times, B may be pushed away” (Tarp, 2018).

In primary school this formula recounts 6 in 2s as 6 = (6/2)*2 = 3*. In secondary school the task is formulated as an equation u*2 = 6 solved by recounting 6 in 2s as u*2 = 6 = (6/2)*2 giving u = 6/2, thus again moving 2 ‘to opposite side with opposite calculation sign’.

Thus an inside equation u*b = c can be ‘demodeled’ to the outside question ‘recount c from ten to bs’, and solved inside by the recount-formula: u*b = c = (c/b)*b giving u = c/b.

Let students see how recounting sides in a block halved by its diagonal creates trigonometry: a = (a/c)*c = sinA*c; b = (b/c)*c = cosA*c; a = (a/b)*b = tanA*b.

And see how filling a circle with right triangles from the inside allows phi to be found from a formula: circumference/diameter = π ≈ n*tan(180/n) for n large.

**Double-counting Grounds Per-numbers and Fractions**
Let students see how double-counting in two units create 'double-numbers' or 'per-numbers' as 2$ per 3kg, or 2$/3kg. To bridge the units, we simply recount in the per-number:

Asking '6$ = ?kg' we recount 6 in 2s: T = 6$ = (6/2)*2$ = (6/2)*3kg = 9kg.

Asking '9kg = ?$' we recount 9 in 3s: T = 9kg = (9/3)*3kg = (9/3)*2$ = 6$.

Let students see how double-counting in the same unit creates fractions and percent as 4$/5$ = 4/5, or 40$/100$ = 40/100 = 40%.

To find 40% of 20$ means finding 40$ per 100$, so we re-count 20 in 100s:

T = 20$ = (20/100)*100$ giving (20/100)*40$ = 8$.

Taking 3$ per 4$ in percent, we recount 100 in 4s, that many times we get 3$:

T = 100$ = (100/4)*4$ giving (100/4)*3$ = 75$ per 100$, so 3/4 = 75%.

Let students see how double-counting physical units create per-numbers all over STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and mathematics):

- kilogram = (kilogram/cubic-meter) * cubic-meter = density * cubic-meter;
- meter = (meter/second) * second = velocity * second;
- joule = (joule/second) * second = watt * second

**The Change Formulas**
Finally, let students enjoy the power and beauty of the number-formula, T = 456 = 4*B^2 + 5*B + 6*1, containing the formulas for constant change:

T = b*x (proportional), T = b*x + c (linear), T = a*x^n (elastic), T = a*n^x (exponential), T = a*x^2 + b*x + c (accelerated).

If not constant, numbers change. So where constant change roots precalculus, predictable change roots calculus, and unpredictable change roots statistics to 'post-dict' what we can't 'pre-dict'; and using confidence for predicting intervals.

Combining linear and exponential change by n times depositing a$ to an interest percent rate r, we get a saving A$ predicted by a simple formula, A/a = R/r, where the total interest percent rate R is predicted by the formula 1+R = (1+r)^n. This saving may be used to neutralize a debt Do, that in the same period changes to D = Do*(1+R).

This formula and its proof are both elegant: in a bank, an account contains the amount a/r. A second account receives the interest amount from the first account, r*a/r = a, and its own interest amount, thus containing a saving A that is the total interest amount R*a/r, which gives A/a = R/r.

**Precalculus Deals with Uniting Constant Per-Numbers as Factors**
Adding 7% to 300$ means 'adding' the change-factor 107% to 300$, changing it to 300*1.07 $. Adding 7% n times thus changes 300$ to T = 300*1.07^n $, the formula for change with a constant change-factor, also called exponential change.

Reversing the question, this formula entails two equations.

The first equation asks about an unknown change-percent. Thus, we might want to find which percent that added ten times will give a total change-percent 70%, or, formulated with change-factors, what is the change-factor, a, that applied ten times gives the change-factor 1.70. So here the job is 'factor-finding' which leads to defining the tenth root of 1.70, i.e. 10√1.70, as predicting the factor, a, that applied 10 times gives 1.70: If a^10 = 1.70 then a = 10√1.70 = 1.054 = 105.4%. This is verified by testing: 1.054^10 = 1.692. Thus, the answer is "5.4% is the percent that added ten times will give a total change-percent 70%."

We notice that 5.4% added ten times gives 54% only, so the 16% remaining to 70% is the effect of compound interest adding 5.4% also to the previous changes.

Here we solve the equation a^10 = 1.70 by moving the exponent to the opposite side with the opposite calculation sign, the tenth root, a = 10√1.70. This resonates with the 'to opposite side with opposite calculation sign' method that also solved the equations a+3 = 7 by a = 7-3, and a*3 = 20 by a = 20/3.

The second equation asks about a time-period. Thus, we might want to find how many times 7% must be added to give 70%, 1.07^n = 1.70. So here the job is factor-counting which leads to defining the logarithm log1.07(1.70) as the number of factors 1.07 that will give a total factor at 1.70: If 1.07^n = 1.70 then n = log1.07(1.70) = 7,84 verified by testing: 1.07^7.84 = 1.700.

We notice that simple addition of 7% ten times gives 70%, but with compound interest it gives a total change-factor 1.07^10 = 1.967, i.e. an additional change at 96.7%-70% = 26.7%, explaining why only 7.84 periods are needed instead of ten.

Here we solve the equation 1.07^n = 1.70 by moving the base to the opposite side with the opposite calculation sign, the base logarithm, n = log1.07(1.70). Again, this resonates with the 'to opposite side with opposite calculation sign' method.

A fresh start precalculus curriculum could 'de-model' the constant percent change exponential formula T = b*a^n to outside real-world problems as a capital in a bank, or as a population increasing or radioactive atoms decreasing by a constant change-percent per year.

De-modeling may also lead to situations where the change-elasticity is constant as in science multiplication formulas wanting to relate a percent change in T with a percent change in n.

An example is the area of a square T = s^2 where a 1% change in the side s will give a 2% change in the square, approximately:

With To = s^2, T1 = (s*1.01)^2 = s^2*1.01^2 = s^2* 1.0201 = To*1.0201.

**Calculus Deals with Uniting Changing Per-Numbers as Areas**

In mixture problems we ask e.g. '2kg at 3$/kg + 4kg at 5$/kg gives 6kg at how many $/kg?' Here, the unit-numbers 2 and 4 add directly, whereas the per-numbers 3 and 5 must be multiplied to unit-numbers before added, thus adding by areas, also called integral calculus where multiplication precedes addition.

Asking inversely '2kg at 3$/kg + 4kg at how many $/kg gives 6kg at 5 $/kg?', we first subtract the areas 6*5 – 2*3 before dividing by 4, a combination called differentiation, ΔT/4, thus meaningfully postponed to after integration.

**Statistics Deals with Unpredictable Change**

Once mastery of constant change is established, it is possible to look at time series in statistical tables asking e.g. "How has the unemployment changed over a ten-year period?"

Here two answers present themselves. One describes the average yearly change-number by using the constant change-number formula, T = b + a*n. The other describes the average yearly change-percent by using a constant change-percent formula, T = b*a^n.

The average numbers allow calculating all totals in the period, assuming the numbers are predictable. However, they are not, so instead of predicting the numbers, we might 'post-dict' the numbers using statistics dealing with unpredictable numbers. This, in turn, offers a likely prediction interval by describing the unpredictable random change with nonfictional numbers, median and quartiles, or with fictional numbers, mean and standard deviation.

Calculus as adding per-numbers by their areas may also be introduced through cross-tables showing real-world phenomena as unemployment changing in time and space, e.g. from one region to another. This leads to double-tables sorting the workforce in two categories, region and employment status. The unit-numbers lead to percent-numbers within each of the categories. To find the total employment percent, the single percent-numbers do not add. First, they must multiply back to unit-numbers to find the total percent. However, multiplying creates areas, so per-numbers add by areas, which is what calculus is about. This procedure is later called Bayes' formula and conditional probability.

An example: in one region 10 persons have 50% unemployment, in another, 90 persons have 5% unemployment. To find the total, the unit-numbers can be added directly to 100 persons, but the percent-numbers must be multiplied back to numbers: 10 persons have 10*0,5 = 5 unemployed; and 90 persons have 90*0,05 = 4.5 unemployed, a total of 5 + 4.5 unemployed = 9.5 unemployed among 100 persons, i.e. a total of 9.5% unemployment, also called the weighted average. Later, this may be renamed to Bayes' formula for conditional probability.

**Modeling in Precalculus Exemplifies Quantitative Literature**

Furthermore, graphing calculators allows authentic modeling to be included in a precalculus curriculum thus giving a natural introduction to the following calculus curriculum, as well as introducing 'quantitative literature' having the same genres as qualitative literature: fact, fiction and fiddle (Tarp, 2001).

Regression translates a table into a formula. Here a two data-set table allows modeling with a degree1 polynomial with two algebraic parameters geometrically representing the initial height, and a direction changing the height, called the slope or the gradient. And a three data-set table allows modeling with a degree2 polynomial with three algebraic parameters geometrically representing the initial height, and an initial direction changing the height, as well as the curving away from this direction. And a four data-set table allows modeling with a degree3 polynomial with four algebraic parameters geometrically representing the initial height, and an initial direction changing the height, and an initial curving away from this direction, as well as a counter-curving changing the curving.

With polynomials above degree1, curving means that the direction changes from a number to a formula, and disappears in top- and bottom points, easily located on a graphing calculator, that also finds the area under a graph in order to add piecewise or locally constant per-numbers.

The area A from x = 0 to x = x under a constant per-number graph y = 1 is A = x; and the area A under a constant changing per-number graph y = x is A = ½*x^2. So, it seems natural to assume that the area A under a constant accelerating per-number graph y = x^2 is A = 1/3*x^3, which can be tested on a graphing calculator thus using a natural science proof, valid until finding counterexamples. Now, if adding many small area strips y*Δx, the total area A = Σ y*Δx is always changed by the last strip.

Consequently, ΔA = y*Δx, or ΔA/Δx = y, or dA/dx = y, or A’ = y for very small changes.

Reversing the above calculations then shows that if A = x, then y = A’ = x’ = 1; and that if A = ½*x^2, then y = A’ = (½*x^2)’ = x; and that if A = 1/3*x^3, then y = A’ = (1/3*x^3)’ = x^2.

This suggest that to find the area under the per-number graph y = x^2 over the distance from x = 1 to 3, instead of adding small strips we just calculate the change in the area over this distance, later called the fundamental theorem of calculus.

This makes sense since adding many small strips means adding many small changes, which gives just one final change since all the in-between end- and start-values cancel out:

$\int_1^3 y*dx = \int_1^3 dA = \Delta_1^3 \text{A} = \Delta_1^3 (\frac{1}{3}*x^3)$ = end – start = $\frac{1}{3}*3^3 - \frac{1}{3}*1^3 = 9 - \frac{1}{3} \approx 8.67$

On the calculus course we just leave out the area by renaming it to a ‘primitive’ or an ‘antiderivative’ when writing

$\int_1^3 y*dx = \int_1^3 x^2*dx = \Delta_1^3 (\frac{1}{3}*x^3)$ = end – start = $\frac{1}{3}*3^3 - \frac{1}{3}*1^3 = 9 - \frac{1}{3} \approx 8.67$

A graphing calculator show that this suggestion holds. So, finding areas under per-number graphs not only allows adding per-numbers, it also gives a grounded and natural introduction to integral and differential calculus where integration precedes differentiation just as additions precedes subtraction.

**A Literature-based Compendium**

From the outside, regression allows giving a practical introduction to calculus by analyzing a road trip where the per-number speed is measured in five second intervals to respectively 10 m/s, 30 m/s, 20 m/s 40 m/s and 15 m/s. With a five data-set table we can choose to model with a degree4 polynomial found by regression. Within this model we can predict when the driving began and ended, what the speed and the acceleration was after 12 seconds, when the speed was 25m/s, when acceleration and braking took place, what the maximum speed was, and what distance is covered in total and in the different intervals.

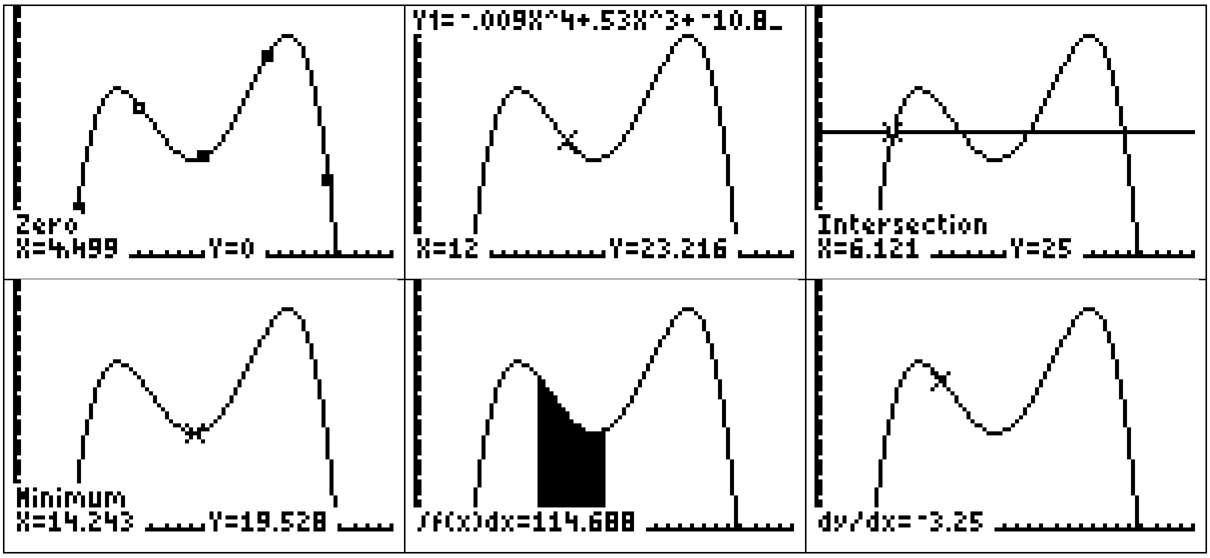


Figure 02. Analyzing Peter’s drive using regression and a graphing calculator

Another example of regression is the project ‘Population versus food’ looking at the Malthusian warning: If population changes in a linear way, and food changes in an exponential way, hunger will eventually occur. The model assumes that the world population in millions changes from 1590 in 1900 to 5300 in 1990 and that food measured in million daily rations changes from 1800 to 4500 in the same period. From this 2- line table regression can produce two formulas: with x counting years after 1850, the population is modeled by Y1= 815*1.013^x and the food by Y2= 300 + 30x. This model predicts hunger to occur 123 years after 1850, i.e. from 1973.

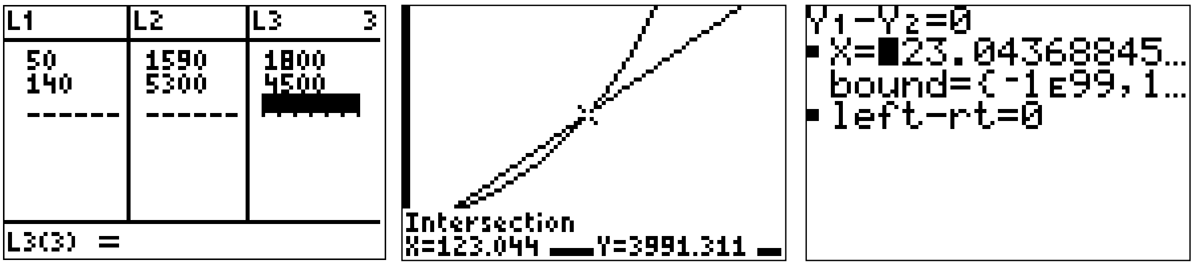


Figure 03. A Malthusian model of population and food levels

An example of a fresh start precalculus curriculum is described in a paper called ‘Saving Dropout Ryan With a Ti-82’ (Tarp, 2012). To lower the dropout rate in precalculus classes, a headmaster accepted buying the cheap TI-82 for a class even if the teachers said students weren’t even able to use a TI-30. A compendium called ‘Formula Predict’ (Tarp, 2009) replaced the textbook. A formula’s left-hand side and right-hand side were put on the y-list as Y1 and Y2 and equations were solved by ‘solve Y1-Y2 = 0’. Experiencing meaning and success in a math class, the students put up a speed that allowed including the core of calculus and nine projects.

Besides the two examples above, the compendium also includes projects on how a market price is determined by supply and demand, on how a saving may be used for paying off a debt or for paying out a pension. Likewise, it includes statistics and probability used for handling questionnaires to uncover attitude-difference in different groups, and for testing if a dice is fair or manipulated. Finally, it includes projects on linear programming and zero-sum two-person games, as well as projects about finding the dimensions of a wine box, how to play golf, how to find a ticket price that maximizes a collected fund, all to provide a short practical introduction to calculus.

**Precalculus in STEM**

With the increased educational interest in STEM, modeling also allows including science-problems as e.g. the transfer of heat taking place when placing an ice cube in water or in a mixture of water and alcohol, or the transfer of energy taking place when connecting an energy source with energy consuming bulbs in series or parallel; as well as technology problems as how to send of a golf ball to hit a desired hole, or when to jump from a swing to maximize the jumping length; as well as engineering problems as how to build a road inclining 5% on a hillside inclining 10%.

Furthermore, precalculus allows students to play with change-equations, later called differential equations since change is calculated as a difference, $\Delta T = T2 - T1$. Using a spreadsheet, it is fun to see the behavior of a total that changes with a constant number or a constant percent, as well as with a decreasing number or a decreasing percent, as well as with half the distance to a maximum value or with a percent decreasing until disappearing at a maximum value. And to see the behavior of a total accelerating with a constant number as in the case of gravity, or with a number proportional to its distance to an equilibrium point as in the case of a spring.

## Conclusion

So, by focusing on uniting and splitting into constant per-numbers, the fresh start precalculus curriculum has constant change-percent as its core. This will cohere with a previous curriculum on constant change-number or linearity; as well as with the following curriculum on calculus focusing on uniting and splitting into locally constant per-numbers, thus dealing with local linearity. Likewise, such a precalculus curriculum is relevant to the workplace where forecasts based upon assumptions of a constant change-number or change-percent are frequent. This curriculum is also relevant to the students' daily life as participants in civil society where tables presented in the media are frequent.

## A Curriculum Example Inspired by a Fresh Start Precalculus Curriculum

An example of a curriculum inspired by the above outline was tested in a Danish high school around 1980. The curriculum goal was stated as: 'the students know how to deal with quantities in other school subjects and in their daily life'. The curriculum means included:

1. Quantities. Numbers and Units. Powers of tens. Calculators. Calculating on formulas. Relations among quantities described by tables, curves or formulas, the domain, maximum and minimum, increasing and decreasing. Graph paper, logarithmic paper.

2. Changing quantities. Change measured in number and percent. Calculating total change. Change with a constant change-number. Change with a constant change-percent. Logarithms.

3. Distributed quantities. Number and percent. Graphical descriptors. Average. Skewness of distributions. Probability, conditional probability. Sampling, mean and deviation, normal distribution, sample uncertainty, normal test, X^2 test.

4. Trigonometry. Calculation on right-angled triangles.

5. Free hours. Approximately 20 hours will elaborate on one of the above topics or to work with an area in which the subject is used, in collaboration with one or more other subjects.

## An example of an exam question

WHAT DOES THE TABLE TELL?

Agriculture: Number of agricultural farms allocated over agricultural area

| | 1968 | 1969 | 1970 | 1971 | 197? | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Farms in total** | **161142** | **154 694** | **148 512** | **144 070** | **143093** | **141 137** | **137712** | **13424S** | **130 7S3** | **127117** |
| 0,0- 4,9 ha | 25 285 | 23 493 | 21 533 | 21623 | 22123 | 21872 | 21093 | 19915 | 18 852 | 17 833 |
| 5.0- 9.9- | 34 644 | 32129 | 30 235 | 28 404 | 27693 | 26 926 | 26109 | 25072 | 24066 | 23152 |
| 10,0-19.9- | 48 997 | 46482 | 43 971 | 41910 | 40850 | 39501 | 38261 | 36 702 | 35 301 | 34 343 |
| 20.0-29.9- | 25670 | 25 402 | 25181 | 24 472 | 24 195 | 23 759 | 23 506 | 23134 | 22737 | 22376 |
| 30,0-49.9- | 18 505 | 18 779 | 18 923 | 18 705 | 18 968 | 18 330 | 19 095 | 19 304 | 10 305 | 19 408 |
| 50,0-99.9- | 6 552 | 6 852 | 7 076 | 7 275 | 7 549 | 7956 | 7 847 | 8247 | 8 556 | 8723 |
| 100.0 ha and over | 1489 | 1 557 | 1611 | 1681 | 1 715 | 1791 | 1801 | 1871 | 1934 | 1882 |