

Letwity 14.11 EXACT SUMS AND DIFFERENCES

Give students a sum involving addends with different numbers of decimal places, for example, 73.46 + 6.2 + 0.582. The first task is to make an estimate and explain how the estimate was made. The second task is to compute the exact answer and explain how that was done (no calculators allowed!). In the third and final task, students devise a method for adding and subtracting decimal numbers that they can use with any two numbers.

When students have completed these three tasks, have students share their strategies for computation and test them on a new computation that you provide. The same task can be repeated for subtraction.

From Van de Walle et. al. (2014). Teaching Student-Centered Mathematics Grades: Developmentally Appropriate Instruction for Grades 3-5 (2^{nd} Ed.). Toronto: Pearson Education, Inc. (p. 271).