



SMP 6 - Attend to Precision

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- 1 SMP 6—Attend to Precision— is about more than right answers. Precision in language,
- 2 representations, and calculations are all equally important. We want students to use clear language,
- 3 precise representations, and accurate calculations when reasoning, discussing, and writing about the
- 4 mathematics they are learning. Attending to precision helps students build strong mathematical habits
- 5 that will serve them well throughout their lives.

- 6 Teachers can support students with this practice by communicating mathematical concepts with clear
- 7 academic language, accurate and well labeled representations, careful calculations, and logical
- 8 explanations.

- 9 Let's consider a first-grade lesson during which students are expected to order three objects by length.
- 10 Students attend to precision by lining the objects up at the same starting point to compare their lengths.
- 11 Then, they describe the lengths in relation to one another using clear and accurate language such as
- 12 “longer” or “shorter.” The teacher may provide sentence frames to support and scaffold this use of
- 13 language.

- 14 SMP 6 encourages students to be mathematically precise in their communication, representation, and
- 15 calculations. Whether they are using correct vocabulary, labeling their work, or verifying their
- 16 calculations, precision is essential in building strong mathematical understanding. By fostering this
- 17 habit, we help students develop accuracy, clarity, and confidence in both their mathematical thinking
- 18 and their ability to communicate it to others.