THE POWER OF SIGNS

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Junior High School Mathematics begin with the study of integers. On this stage, students are taught about addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of positive and negative numbers. These seem to be tedious to some students but they must realize that signs, such as positive and negative can have a tremendous impact on the value of a number. For example, -7 is a lot different from +7 and -1 is 2 less than +1.

As this lesson is taught among students, at times they suggest that teachers should consider their answers correct even if the sign is not. But they should know that signs make a great deal among numbers. If you are adding a positive number to a negative number, subtract them. If you are subtracting two numbers, you change sign of the subtrahend. If you are multiplying/dividing two number with common signs, the answer is positive, even if they are both negative. If you are multiplying/dividing numbers with different signs, the result is negative, regardless of which is greater.

See! Signs of numbers makes a great deal to their value and results. This is the reason why students must be more careful in dealing with them. These positive and negative signs are not to be disregarded by the learners. They should always be keen in observing the signs as they solve a certain mathematical problem. This is in order to attain accurate solutions.

Some of the learners, even on their 10th Grade, are struggling with this basic knowledge in Mathematics. Teachers should make ways to help students be more familiar with signed numbers. Here are the models for teaching addition and subtraction of positive and negative numbers that are designed to lead to understanding.
a. Hot Air Balloon  
b. Happiness Model  
c. Football Model  
d. Counters Model  

These are only some of the strategies on teaching operations on signed numbers which will be beneficial to the students. As teachers, it is their responsibility to continue to discover ways to make this seemed-to-be an incomprehensible lesson become clearer in the minds of the learners.  

It is a challenge that Mathematics teachers should face and never be afraid of.

References:  
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