
Preface to the Third Edition

I began teaching in 1962, and *About Teaching Mathematics: A K–8 Resource* has been a work in progress for just about half of my teaching career. The goals of mathematics instruction today are clear—develop children’s ability to think and reason mathematically and help them learn the concepts and skills they need to do so. The challenge for teachers is also clear—help all students become successful math learners who can apply their understanding and skills in all of the content areas of mathematics to a range of problem-solving situations. My purpose for writing this book has been to help teachers meet this challenge.

Meeting this challenge for myself has occupied my professional journey of more than forty years. About halfway into my teaching career, in 1981, I wrote the first version of this book, which was available to teachers only as a coursebook for the inservice classes I was teaching. During the years that followed, I spent a good deal of time revising, amplifying, reorganizing, and clarifying my ideas. In 1992, that initial version evolved into *About Teaching Mathematics: A K–8 Resource*, available to all teachers, not just to those enrolled in my classes.

I reviewed the book often after it was published and collected a file of changes that I felt would enhance its usefulness. In 2000, I finally tackled making revisions and published the second edition of *About Teaching Mathematics*. For that edition, I made changes to most of the sections in the book. Also, I added a major section, Part 4, “Mathematical Discussions,” where I offered mathematical help in response to the volume of letters I had received from teachers asking for guidance with specific activities and problems in the book.

Now, seven years later, I’m pleased to present the third edition of *About Teaching Mathematics*. Two reasons inspired me to make this revision. One was to overhaul Part 1, “Raising the Issues,” the section in which I address concerns that are key to K–8 mathematics teaching. The revised Part 1 includes both changes to the existing text and the addition of other topics, and it represents my current thinking on the issues that I think are important for teachers to reflect on.

Another reason for preparing this third edition was to add Part 5, “Questions Teachers Ask,” in which I present responses to questions I’ve received from teachers over the years. (As I said in my preface to the second edition, I save everything!) For this section, I combed through my correspondence and chose questions that have a broad appeal even though each was raised by an

individual teacher. And although the questions were asked from the perspectives of specific grade levels, I suggest that you comb through all of them, as many are appropriate for other grade levels as well.

I hope that this third edition of *About Teaching Mathematics* supports your quest to help students become confident and successful math learners.