Glossary of Common Math Terms

Use the definitions in this glossary of math terms to help you talk about math ideas .

from: http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/math/math-tips-for-parents/glossary-math-terms/

Angle: the V-shaped figure formed by two lines meeting at a point (angle shape); or, the measure of the turn formed by two lines meeting at a point (angle measure).

Attribute: a detail, such as size, shape, or color, used to describe an object.

Area: the number of square units that fit inside a two-dimensional shape (like a rectangle), or that cover a surface of a three-dimensional shape (like a cube).

Bar Graph: a graph where the length of a bar represents a certain amount.

Circle: a two-dimensional round shape where every point on its boundary is the same distance from the center.

Circumference: the distance around a circle.

Cube: a three-dimensional solid shape with 6 identical square faces.

Cylinder: a three-dimensional solid shape with identical circular ends (a can).

Estimation: an educated 'guess'; a rough calculation.

Geometry: the mathematics of points, angles, lines, surfaces, flat shapes and solids.

Graph: a drawing or diagram that shows the relationship between numbers using pictures, bars, or lines.

Line: a collection of points forming a straight path extending in two directions.

One-to-One Correspondence: the matching of one thing to another; for example, the matching of the number "3" to three bears, or "4" to moving forward four spaces on a board game.

Parallel: lines that are always the same distance apart and never intersect.

Pattern: a design or sequence that repeats itself in a predictable way.

Probability: the numerical chance that a specific outcome will occur.

Pyramid: a three-dimensional shape with a square or triangular base and triangular sides that

come together in a point.

Rectangle: a two-dimensional, four-sided shape with two pairs of equal-length, parallel sides and four right angles.

Spatial Reasoning Skills: the ability to figure out how two-dimensional flat shapes or three-

dimensional solid shapes may fit together to create new shapes.

Square: a two-dimensional, four-sided shape with equal-length sides and four right angles.

Statistics: the mathematics of collecting and analyzing data to draw conclusions and make predictions.

Symmetry: an attribute of a figure where one part of it fits exactly onto itself, as when something can be folded along a line so the two halves match exactly.

Tally: a way to keep track when counting by making marks or using counters.

Tessellation: a design of repeating shapes that fit together without gaps or overlaps.

Triangle: a two-dimensional, three-sided shape with three angles.

Volume: how much a container holds, or the amount of space occupied by a three-dimensional object.