

Developing Students' Relational Understanding: Innovations and Insights

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I recently had the opportunity to teach a developmental mathematics class at a community college, something a little different from what I usually do as a mathematics teacher educator at a university. I welcomed the chance to examine the curriculum and try some new approaches. In particular, I wanted to explore the development of some fundamental ideas and look for ways to promote students' mathematical understanding. I entered the experience in a spirit of inquiry, seeking insights in relation to questions such as the following: What kinds of tasks can engage community college students in developing their mathematical understanding? What are the challenges to the students? What are the challenges to the instructor?