

Preservice Point of View: Sets of Numbers

Tena L. Golding

This section of our journal is designed to link teachers and future teachers. In each journal we will share responses to a mathematical concept task presented to students in classes for future teachers. The perspectives revealed in these responses should provide insights into increased understanding, reveal possible misconceptions, and suggest implications for improved instruction. It is our hope that this section of the journal will initiate a dialogue on concept development that will both better prepare our future teachers and reinforce the practices of current teachers.

Working in groups, students in a secondary mathematics methods course were given the following charge. Before you read the pre-service responses, try it yourself OR ask your students!

Draw a diagram to illustrate the relationship among the following sets of numbers; rational, irrational, integers, real, whole, natural, complex and imaginary.

It was a little disheartening to see a number of incorrect diagrams from these senior level mathematics students. However, this activity led to a nice class discussion and helped to dispel the notion that “math methods is a piece of cake!”

[Click here for responses.](#)