

Mathlets in Homework, Segment 1

Mathlets: An Introduction

We began this short course by pointing out that the Mathlets can provide a powerful enhancement of the traditional lecture. The Mathlets offer an even more powerful learning tool if the students operate them themselves. We've talked about one context in which that can happen in group work, either in a lecture setting or in smaller groups.

Mathlets can be integrated into homework assignments for individual students as well. Of course, for this to work, the student must have to have access to the Mathlets. Currently, the applets are mostly implemented in Java, which students can access anywhere on their own computer. And we're in the process of translating Mathlets into JavaScript, which will enable you and your students to access them on tablets, and even smart phones.

My objective in this module is simple, to describe the use of Mathlets in homework. But before we see the examples, I have two general pieces of advice to give you about basing homework problems around Mathlets.

First, generally speaking, you have to be very precise in your instructions about the use of Mathlets in homework. Much more precise than in project descriptions designed for group work. And second, your students will be much happier using a Mathlet if you have already demonstrated it in class.

The two segments of this module represent various types of homework assignments based on the Mathlets. After each one, I will discuss the decisions I made in framing the homework problem as I did. And at the end of the module, there are some exercises for you.

Now, please see the course website for a text of some examples in using Mathlets in Homework.