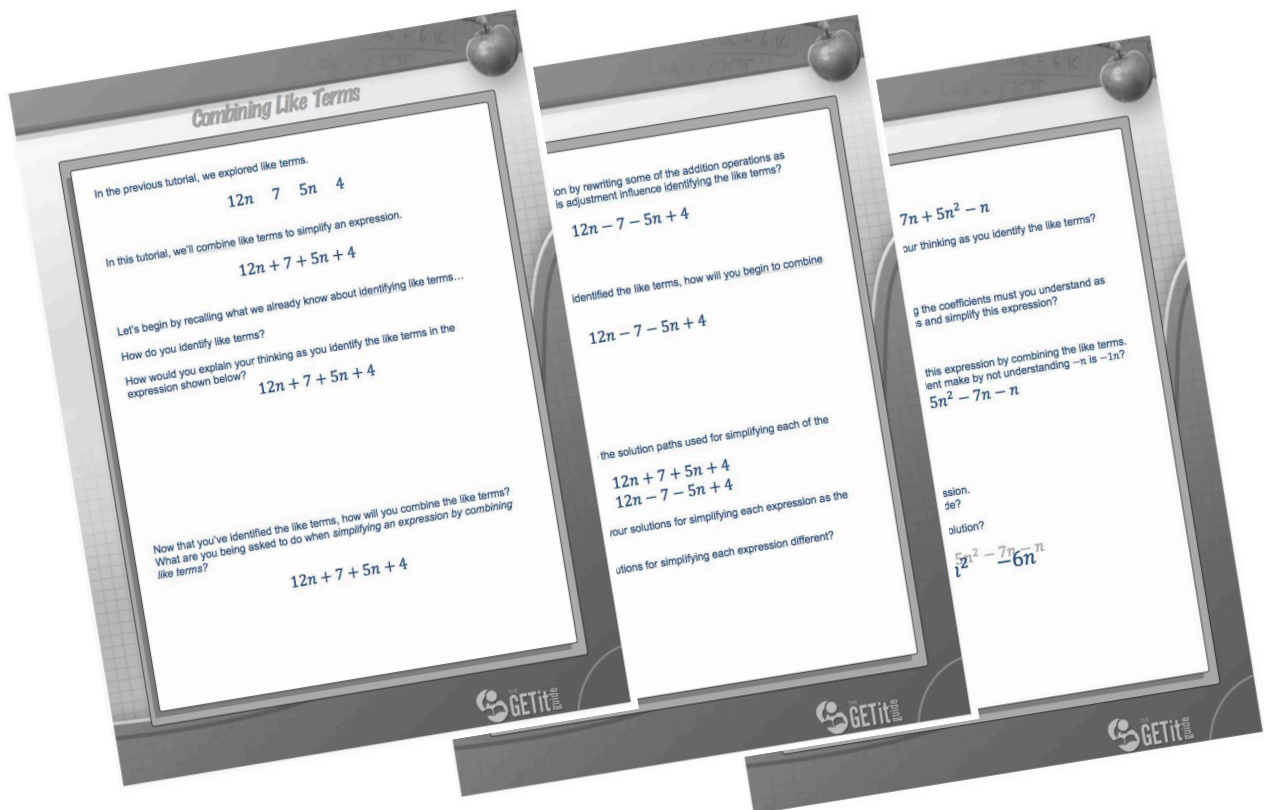




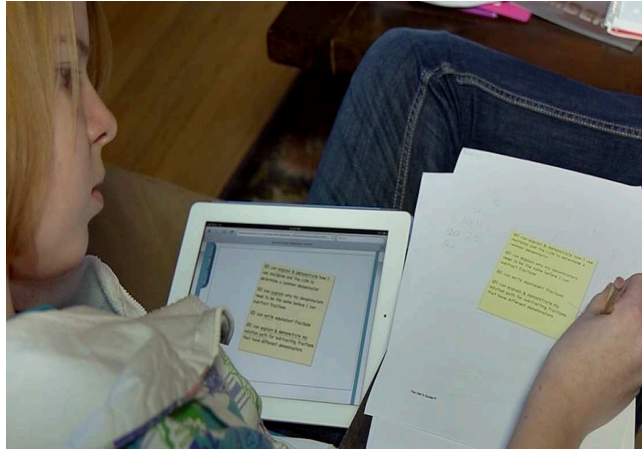
## Writing in Mathematics

The Get It Guide™ Math Tutorials use effective questions to help students focus and elaborate on their thinking as they work through a math problem. Asking effective questions engages students in the learning process and promotes student discourse as a key component of learning. The effective questions for each tutorial can be printed as a writing activity.



Students can use the worksheets to document their thinking at each step of their solution to a math problem. Writing allows students to reflect and reshape how they see, understand and ultimately solve a particular math problem. Writing also allows students to share their ideas and approaches for solving with family members, classmates, and with you, their teacher.

Each *Get It Guide*™ math writing activity concludes with a skill checklist. Students can focus on the individual prerequisite skills that are central to solving their problem. Students can practice writing their own examples and explanations for each skill. The skills checklist provides students the opportunity to self-assess their understanding and identifies any gaps in knowledge that may prevent them solving the problem successfully.



**Combining Like Terms - Skills Checklist**

*Like terms have the same variable... raised to the same exponent*

*I start by looking for terms with the same variable. Next, I look at the value of the exponent the variable is raised to. Like terms also have the same exponent...*

*$3n$  &  $12n$  are like terms*  
 *$3n^2$  &  $12n$  are not like terms*

*To avoid making an error when simplifying terms such as  $-5x - 3x$ ... I'll add the opposite...  $-5x + (-3x)$*

- I can define like terms
- I can identify like terms
- I can explain how I simplify an expression by combining like terms
- I can combine like terms that have positive and negative coefficients

*To simplify an expression I...*

- *First, identify the like terms. It's important to also identify if a term is positive or negative.*
- *Second, I will rewrite my expression by grouping the like terms together. I must be careful to include the operation as positive or negative*
- *Finally, I will simplify by combining the like terms through addition.*

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