

Always, Sometimes or Never True - Set #1

Malcolm Swan

Mathematics Education
University of Nottingham
Malcolm.Swan@nottingham.ac.uk

Jim Ridgway

School of Education
University of Durham
Jim.Ridgway@durham.ac.uk

Introduction:

You will be given a number of statements. You must decide if each statement is

- always true, or
- sometimes true, or
- never true

You must provide full and convincing reasons for your decision. If you think that a statement is sometimes true, you must fully explain *when* it is true and *when* it is not true.

Here is an example of what we mean:

Example:

When you add two numbers, you get the same result as when you multiply them.



Weaker response:

This statement is sometimes true.
It is true when both numbers are 0 and when both numbers are 2.
It is not true when one number is 2 and one number is 3.

Stronger response:

This statement is sometimes true.
Suppose one number is x and one number is y .
The statement says that: $x+y = xy$
This simplifies to the condition that $y = x/(x-1)$

A few pairs of numbers when it works are therefore:
(0, 0); (2, 2); (3, 3/2); (4, 4/3); (5, 5/4)

There are also other pairs which work!

The aim of this assessment is to provide the opportunity for you to:

- test statements to see how far they are true;
- provide examples or counterexamples to support your conclusions
- provide convincing arguments or proofs to support your conclusions

For each statement, say whether it is always, sometimes or never true.

You must provide **several examples or counterexamples** to support your decision.

Try also to provide **convincing** reasons for your decision.

You may even be able to provide a **proof** in some cases.

1. The more digits a number has, then the larger is its value.

Is this always, sometimes or never true?

Reasons or examples:

2. If you multiply 12 by a number, the answer will be greater than 12.

Is this always, sometimes or never true?

Reasons or examples:

3. The square of a number is greater than that number.

Is this always, sometimes or never true?

Reasons or examples:

4. If two rectangles have the same perimeter, they have the same area.

Is this always, sometimes or never true?

Reasons or examples:

5. Pentagons have fewer right angles than rectangles.

Is this always, sometimes or never true?

Reasons or examples:

6. Quadrilaterals tessellate.

Is this always, sometimes or never true?

Reasons or examples:

