

Algebra Vocabulary

6th Grade

Term, coefficient, constant, variable — the four words every question uses.

An expression is made of terms separated by + and –. Each term has a coefficient and possibly a variable.

$$7x^2 + 3x - 5$$

Terms

$7x^2, 3x, -5$

Three of them, split at the + and – signs.

Coefficient

7 and 3

The number multiplying a variable.

Variable

x

The letter standing for an unknown.

Constant

–5

A term with no variable. It never changes.

THE COMMON MISTAKE

✗ the term is 5

✓ the term is –5

The sign in front belongs to the term. Dropping it changes the answer.

An expression has no equals sign. Add one and it becomes an equation.