

Name _____

Date _____

Unit 2 · Expressions, formulae and equations — glossary

All 24 key words, with a worked example for each.

Term	Meaning	Example
expression	A collection of numbers and letters with no equals sign.	$5n + 4$ is an expression.
equation	Numbers and letters together with an equals sign.	$5n + 4 = 19$ is an equation.
term	One part of an expression, separated by + or −.	$5n + 4$ has two terms: $5n$ and 4 .
like terms	Terms with exactly the same letters to the same powers.	$5a$ and $2a$ are like terms; $5a$ and $2b$ are not.
collecting like terms	Adding or subtracting like terms to shorten an expression.	$3x + 2x = 5x$.
simplify	To write an expression in as short a form as possible.	$4x + 3y + 2x - y$ simplifies to $6x + 2y$.
coefficient	The number that multiplies a variable.	In $5n$ the coefficient of n is 5 .
constant	A number on its own, whose value never changes.	In $5n + 4$ the constant is 4 .
variable	A letter representing a quantity that can change.	In $A = lw$, both l and w are variables.
unknown	A letter standing for a number you do not yet know.	In $x + 5 = 12$, x is the unknown.
equivalent expression	An expression with the same value as another.	$5 \times n + 4$ and $5n + 4$ are equivalent.
formula	A rule showing the relationship between quantities.	$A = l \times w$ is the formula for the area of a rectangle.
formulae	The plural of formula.	$A = lw$ and $P = 2(l + w)$ are two formulae.
substitute	To replace a letter with a number.	Substituting $x = 4$ into $3x + 2$ gives 14 .
derive	To write your own formula from a situation.	From “\$8 a book” you derive $C = 8n$.

Term	Meaning	Example
expand	To multiply out brackets and write the expression without them.	$4(n + 3)$ expands to $4n + 12$.
brackets	Symbols () used to group terms together.	In $2(x - 5)$ the brackets show that both terms are multiplied by 2.
solve	To find the value of the unknown that makes an equation true.	Solving $x + 5 = 12$ gives $x = 7$.
solution	The value of the unknown that makes the equation true.	The solution of $2y + 4 = 16$ is $y = 6$.
inverse operation	The operation that undoes another one.	You undo “+ 5” by subtracting 5.
inequality	A statement that one quantity is greater or less than another.	$x > 5$ is an inequality.
integer	A positive or negative whole number, including zero.	The smallest integer with $x > 5$ is 6.
index	The small raised number showing a power.	In a^2 the index is 2.
simplest form	An expression that cannot be shortened any further.	$6x + 2y$ is the simplest form of $4x + 3y + 2x - y$.