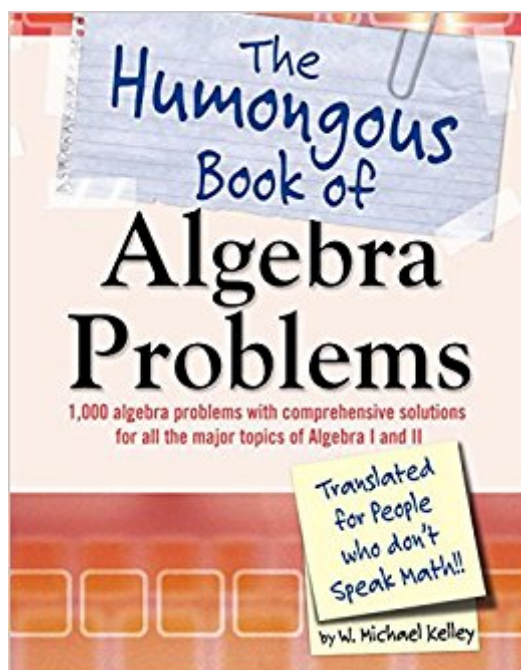


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The Humongous Book Of Algebra Problems



Synopsis

When the numbers just don't add up! Following in the footsteps of the successful The Humongous Books of Calculus Problems, bestselling author Michael Kelley has taken a typical algebra workbook, and made notes in the margins, adding missing steps and simplifying concepts and solutions. Students will learn how to interpret and solve problems as they are typically presented in algebra courses; and become prepared to solve those problems that were never discussed in class but always seem to find their way onto exams. Annotations throughout the text clarify each problem and fill in missing steps needed to reach the solution, making this book like no other algebra workbook on the market

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My 13 year old son is taking Algebra, which I haven't taken in more than a few years. When he's struggling with a particular problem, we pull out the Humongous Book of Algebra Problems for help. Mr. Kelley is funny, down-to-earth, and explains Algebra so that even I can understand it! We would be lost without this book. The book is organized like a textbook, but one that someone made great notes in! The explanations are easy to understand, especially if you don't speak MATH! The other wonderful thing we discovered is that the chapters are organized in the same order that they are taught in school - which may sound obvious, but for a 13 year old boy, consistency rocks! If you are looking for normal, human explanations on how to do Algebra, this is the book for you!

I found this to be the absolute best algebra book I have ever used. I am actually giving it 4.5 stars. The reason being, although it is phenomenal, there are some errors and I just can't justify a full 5 stars to a math book with errors (more on this later). I'll throw out my math background and why I bought this book. I've taken Algebra I (high school), Algebra II (high school), Algebra w/Trig (high school), pre-calculus (high school), Intermediate College Algebra, College Trig, and College Algebra. The 3 college classes were over 10 years ago. Absolutely nothing has given me the clarity that this book provided (with the caveat that I'm older and more serious about the subject now). I am going back to school and taking College Algebra and Trig again soon so I bought this book as a refresher. The style of the book (the notes, witty comments, and hints) are great and the fact that he goes through all of the steps and explains them really made the concepts hit home for me. I hit this book at a clip of 3 hours per day and was able to get through the entire thing between 2/27/12 and 3/11/12 (with one day sort of off where I only worked for 46 minutes - yeah I did actually track my progress:)). So if you want to get through it, that's how long it's gonna take (more or less). Prior to this book I went all the way through the Maran Illustrated Effortless Algebra book (which took a little over a week). Effortless Algebra doesn't even come close to the HBoAP. I also have Practical Algebra (A Self-Teaching Guide) and College Algebra Demystified - neither of which compare to the HBoAP. I actually found myself fascinated by Algebra while going through this book and I'm looking forward to taking my classes (and then moving beyond!). Now, there were some errors:

Page 229 (problem 10.34) should read - The 2x2 Matrix "RIGHT" (not left) of the dotted line is A^{-1} , the inverse matrix of A.

Page 243 (problem 11.18) a should = -19 NOT -16 as $(-38/2)$ in the previous step = -19

Page 254 (problem 11.44) The top row of synthetic division should have a -9 NOT a +9

Page 408 (problem 18.23) The final answer should be $e^g(e) = e^1$ ----- which simplifies to $g(e) = 1$. The answer IS NOT $g(3) = 1$. (Mike was kind enough to answer this one for me via email as it baffled me how he came to this answer and I spent an hour staring at it.)

Page 518 (problem 23.5) When solving the equation using the quadratic formula you are solving for "y" but it's evaluated for "x" at the end. Granted there aren't that many errors for a book with 1,000 problems in it, but since these are all skull questions (really hard ones) they should have the correct answers. I know that no book is perfect and errors happen, but I cannot give it 5 stars because of these errors, not so much for my sake, but for the super-beginner algebra person who may not spot these and could be really led astray due to these errors. I also felt that Mike toned down the explanations in the logarithm sections, which is probably the hardest section in the book. I think if this book is revised that this section needs more problems and more detailed explanations. Outside of these minor issues, this book is outstanding.

Edit: As a followup I took the COMPASS test today (3/12-12) and tested into

pre-calculus thanks to this book and the time I put into studying.

I'm good at math but bad teachers made me hate algebra since high-school. I hated carrying that trauma around so I decided to learn algebra and prove to myself that there was nothing to be afraid of. From page one I started going "Oh, now I get it!". The book is wonderfully laid, clear explanations, definitions that make sense, clues and tips everywhere... and many problems to solve until you get it!

lots of problems explained: excellent example problems all done out for basic explanations or even a review if you or your parents are a little rusty

This book is really helpful for anyone taking Algebra, Algebra 2, or College Algebra. As a math tutor, this book is very helpful on giving idea how to break down the math for students and teaching it more effectively for them to understand it. It's work really well with all Algebra textbooks. Even with college math programs (ex. Plato) that don't require a math textbook, this is the BEST!

Wow, just wow. I can't recommend this book enough A few months ago, I decided to go back to school (specifically for a master's program) and started looking for a text that could help me review all of the algebra I'd forgotten (in preparation for reviewing all the calculus I'd forgotten). I was basically looking for something that A) would give me a broad understanding of all of the important Algebra topics I need to know and B) wouldn't baby me or throw too much at me in one go. While there are plenty of online and offline resources to help understand specific topics and areas of Algebra, nothing has been quite right (either the explanations focus too much on explaining the simple stuff, doesn't explain enough of the basics or doesn't cover enough topics). The Humongous Book of Algebra problems, however, has been absolutely perfect for what I need. There are basically two reasons why I absolutely love this book. First, format of the book. This book is written in a basic Q and A format where a question is asked and Kelly answer it both on a technical and theoretical level (ie, what you do to the numbers to get the answer and why it works that way). Each question is answered in a quick no-nonsense style that gives you the important information - no more, no less. This format breaks up Algebra into bite sized questions that lets the reader take in as much information as he or she needs. At some points I was able to breeze past several pages, while at other points I needed to read and reread an answer before finally getting it. Apart from the fine intake control, the Q and A style breaks everything up into small steps that allows you to pin point

exactly what you get and what you don't get. Sometimes texts and materials try to bundle up several subtopics into one overarching topic. As a result, it can be difficult to figure out what exactly you don't understand or what you need to go over to get the concept. Not so with this book. Also, this Q and A style allows you to quiz yourself. After covering a few pages, you can go back, cover the solution, and try to answer the question in your own words. The solutions are extensive enough that answering most requires you to deeply understand why something works the way it does (which, you have to admit, is much better than the end of the chapter battery of plug and chug questions that most textbooks give you). Second, the wording. This is where the book really shines. Most math books force you to choose between two styles - a super jargon heavy technical style or a simplified conversational style. Each have their strengths and weaknesses (Jargon will help you understand advanced texts but can be difficult to get an initial understanding of; The simplified style is easy to understand, but can get annoying as you start trying to get a deeper understanding of what's going on), but this book takes the best of both. As its base, it uses a technical style that doesn't get too heavy, but still uses the proper terminology. However, the little 'notes' that Kelly has added to the book gives you little tricks and simple alternative explanations that help the reader grasp the core concept quickly. There were so many "ohhh now I get it" moments as I read these notes. As a result, while the book has enough rigor to keep you advancing as a student, the side notes make you feel like you've got a helpful tutor pointing out the easiest ways to understand the harder topics. If any of this sounds like it will be the least bit helpful for your study goals, I definitely suggest you pick up a copy of this book.

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