

# Hitting the "Abstract Wall" – Why Good Students Struggle When

Category: Teacher's Corner   Read Time: 5 min read

- It's Developmental, Not Behavioral: The struggle with abstraction (like algebra, physics definitions, or calculus) is a natural part of learning.
- The Danger of Skipping Steps: Teachers often feel pressured to jump straight to the formula or the symbol, skipping the concrete examples that help students build a mental model.
- The C-R-A Protocol: The only reliable way to teach abstract concepts is the Concrete -> Representational -> Abstract protocol.
- Visual Anchors: In Classes 6-8, a student should never see a symbol (like 'x') before they have seen a concrete example that it represents.

Source: <https://www.studymaxx.com/blog/hitting-the-abstract-wall-why-good-students-struggle-when-math-stops-being-about-numbers>