

# Equipment

Paper, pencil, ruler

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Page 2

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## **Concepts**

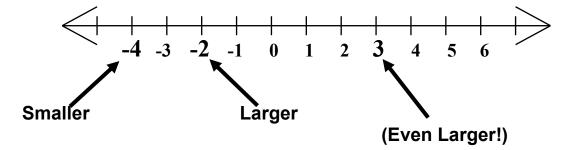
It is important with children to distinguish between using the 'minus' sign to perform subtraction and using it to indicate a negative number (ie a number less than zero). In the good old days, we used the word 'minus' for both concepts and this led to great confusion such as 'two minuses make a plus' (but only, unfortunately, in some circumstances). In the early days it is as well to avoid the use of 'minus' and use the words 'subtract' and 'negative', although sometimes in Key Stage 2 SATs the word 'minus' is used in the mental arithmetic test and 'minus' is in general use for temperature readings, of course.

When used to indicate a negative number, the sign may be written level with the middle of the number, as in –4, and sometimes it is raised, as in <sup>-</sup>5. Both forms are used in Mathsphere units to familiarise children with the two types of usage.

#### Larger or Smaller

When trying to decide which of two numbers is the larger, especially if at least one of them is negative, imagine the numbers on a number line with negatives to the left and positives to the right. **The number to the right is** <u>always</u> **the larger of the two:** 

### e.g. Which is larger, -4 or -2?



If this is still not clear, imagine the number line on its side with negative numbers below and positive numbers above as in a thermometer. The further up the thermometer a number is, the higher is the number, whether it is positive or negative. After all, a temperature of -3 is warmer than a temperature of -12!

<u>6130</u>	Recognise and order negative	Page 3	
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**1.** Discuss with your teacher or parent the meaning of these words:

positive, negative, minus, above zero, below zero, rise, fall.

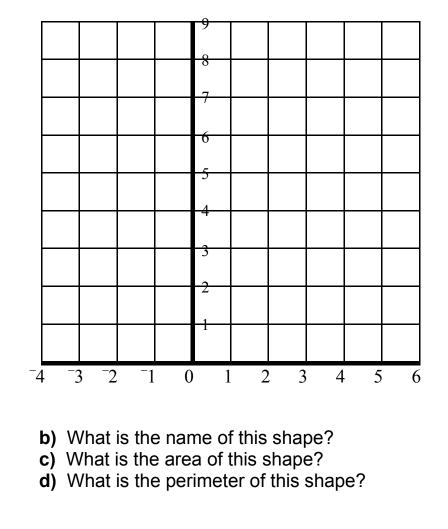
Can you spell them all correctly?

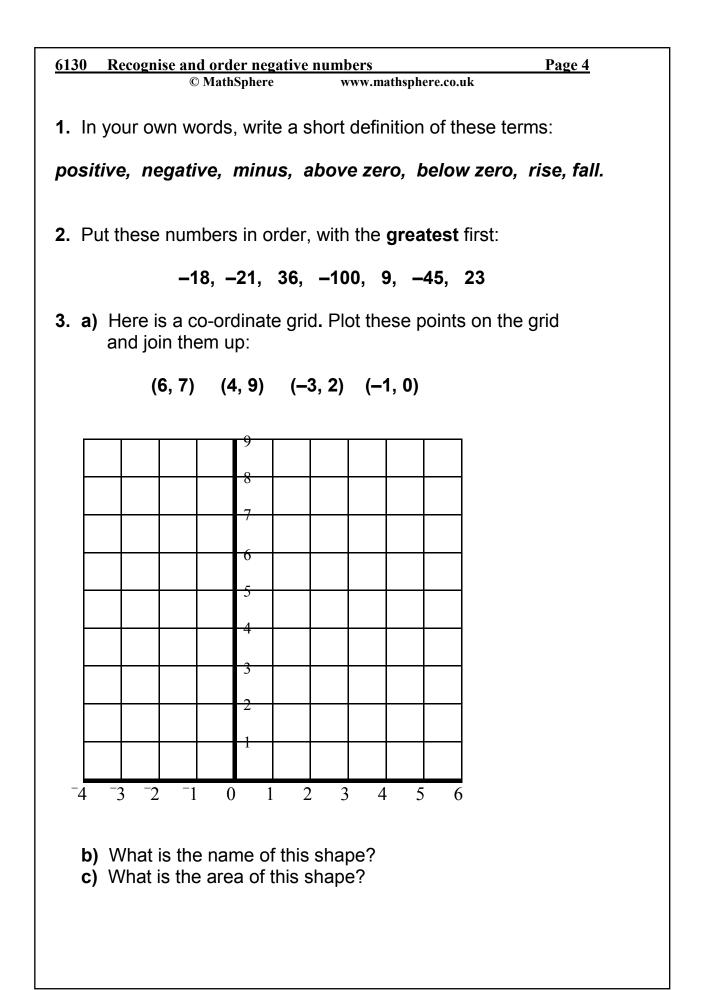
2. Put these numbers in order, with the least first:

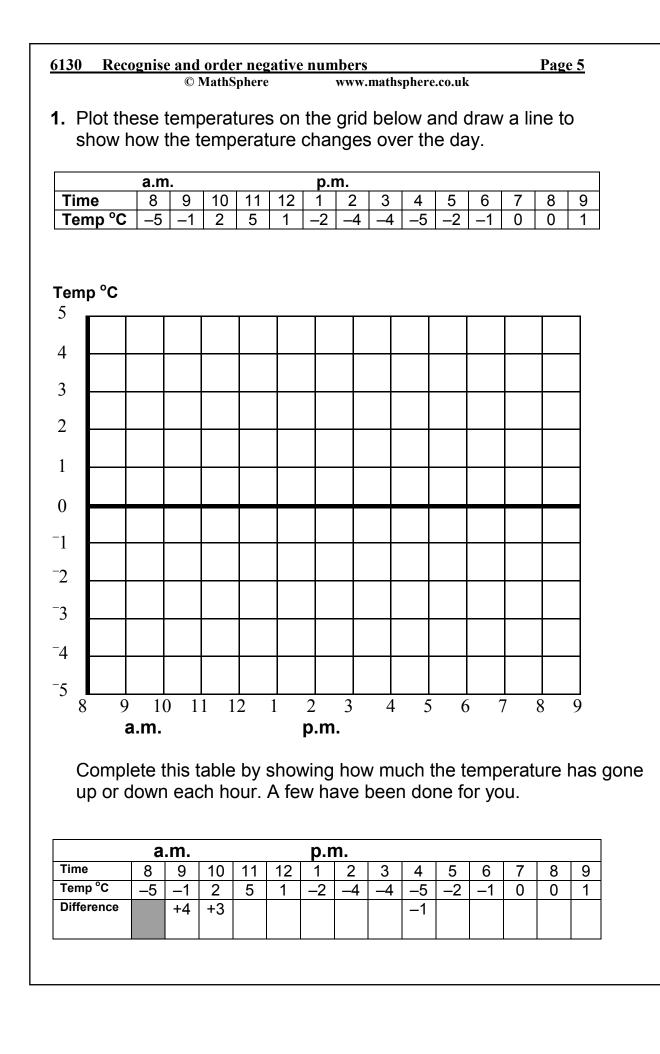
56, -12, -19, 7, -23, -31, 31

**3.** a) Here is a co-ordinate grid. Plot these points on the grid and join them up:

(4, 2) (4, 8) (-3, 8) (-3, 2)



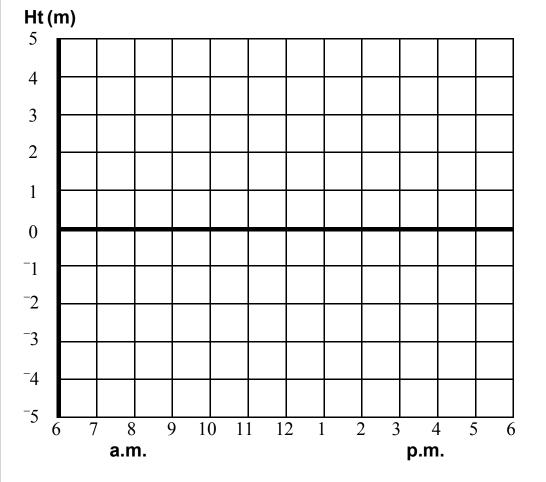




## 6130Recognise and order negative numbersPage 6© MathSpherewww.mathsphere.co.uk

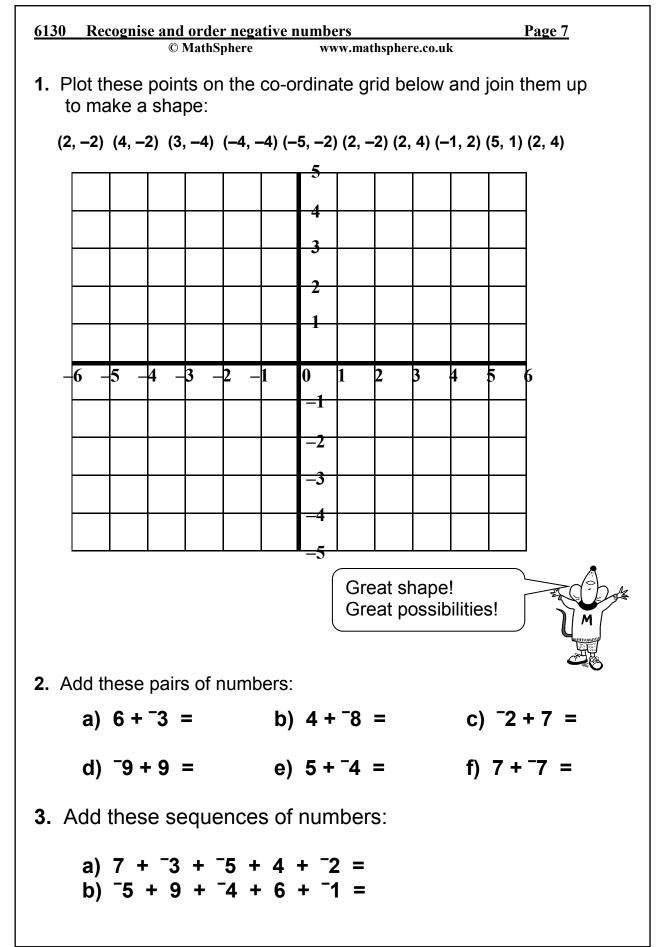
1. The height of the tide is measured from the average height. This table shows the heights over a period of 12 hours. Put these heights on the grid below and draw a line to show how the tide changes over the day.

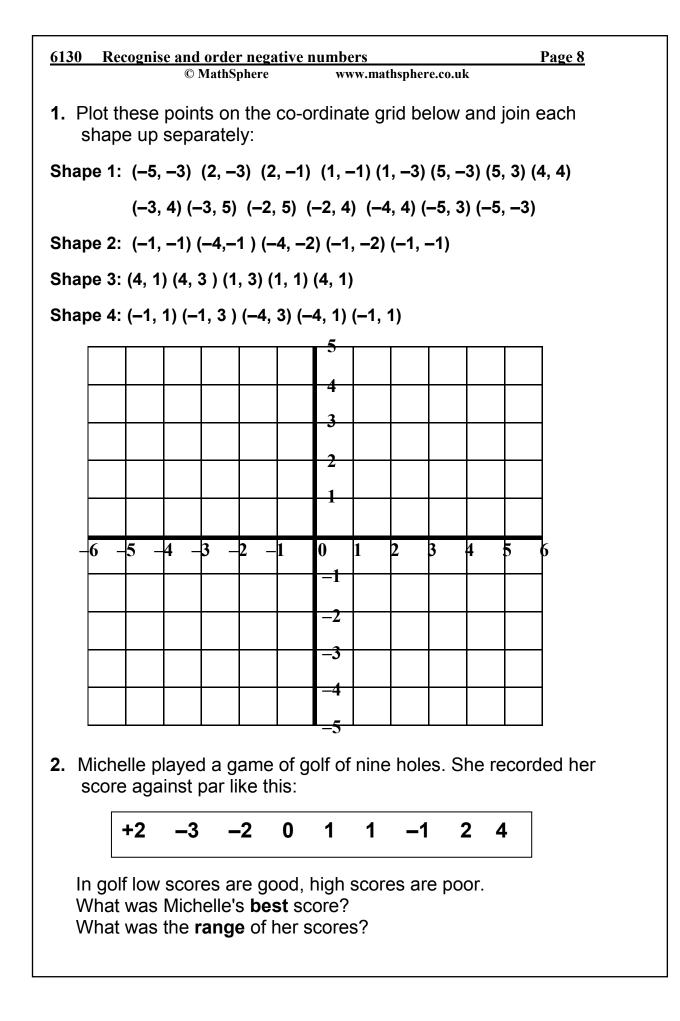
		p.m.											
Time	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
Height (m)	-4	-3	-1.5	0	1	2	2.5	2.5	1.5	0.5	-1	<sup>-</sup> 2	-3

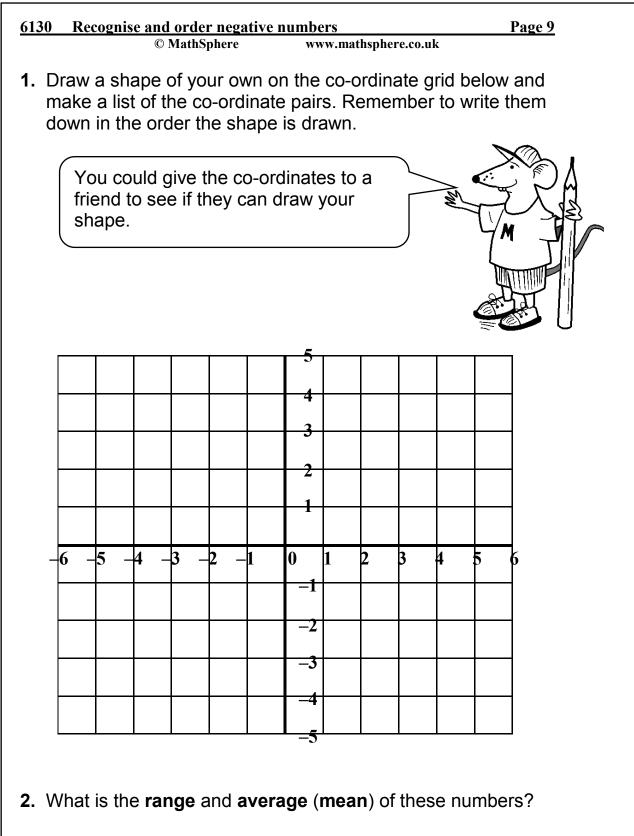


Complete this table by showing how much the tide has gone up or down each hour. A few have been done for you.

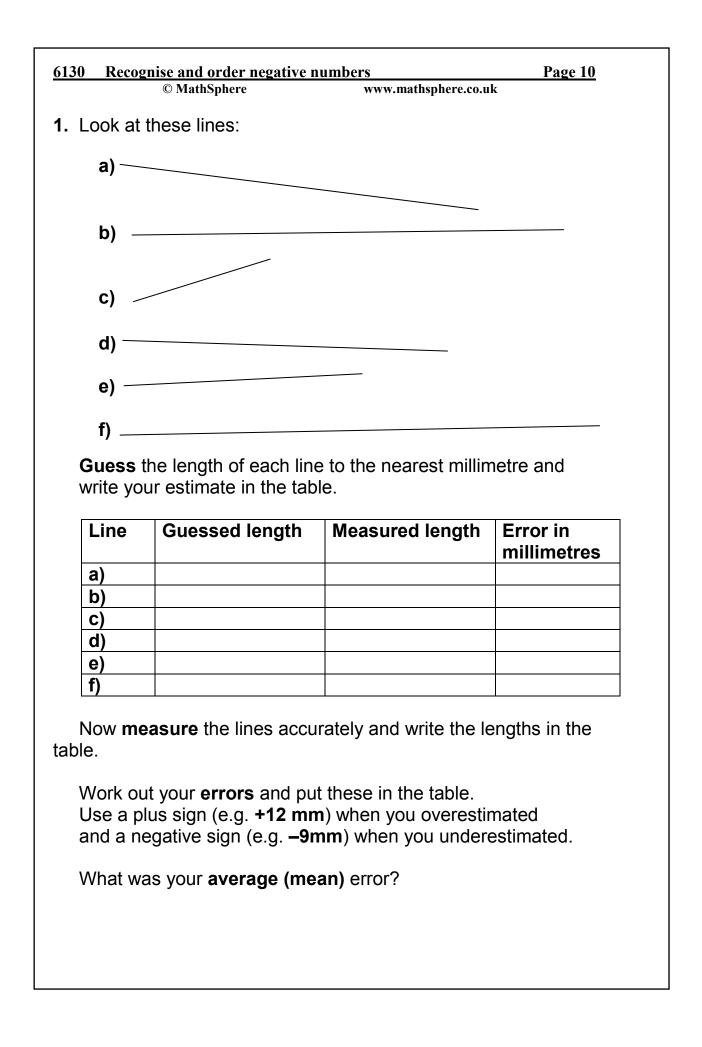
a.m.					p.m.								
Time	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6
Height (m)	-4	-3	-1.5	0	1	2	2.5	2.5	1.5	0.5	-1	-2	-3
Difference		+1	+1.5									-1	

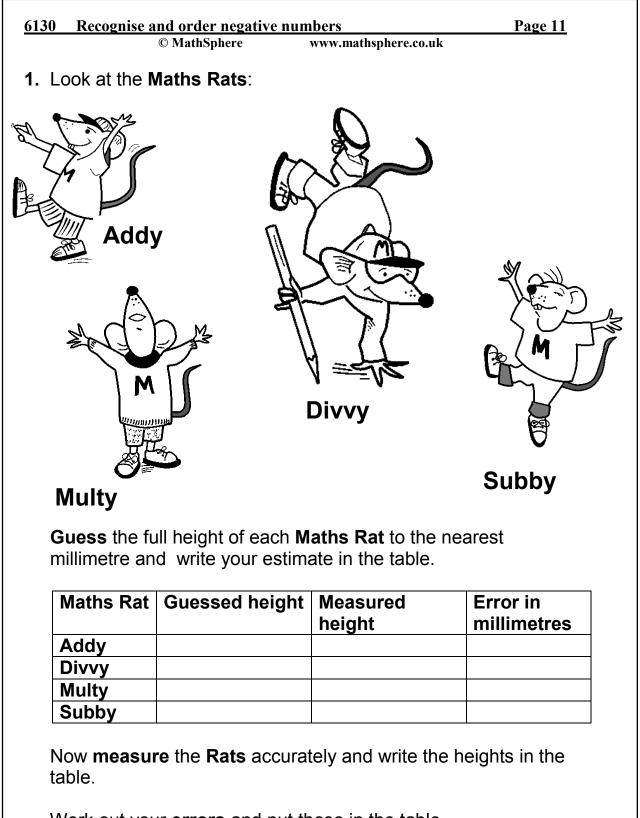






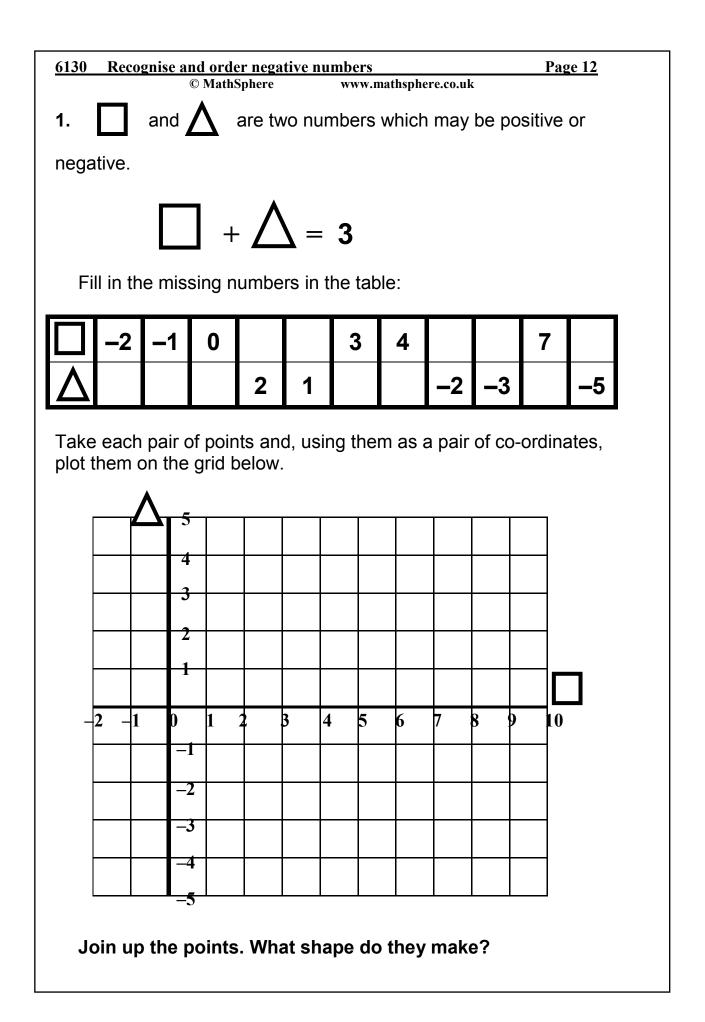
2, -5, -8, 4, -3

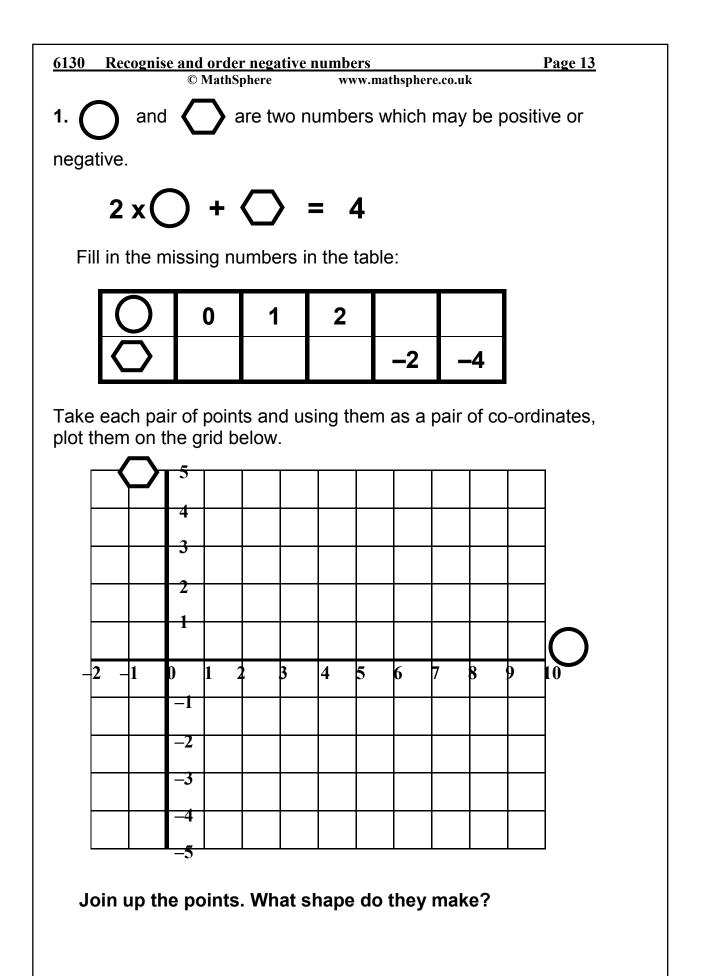


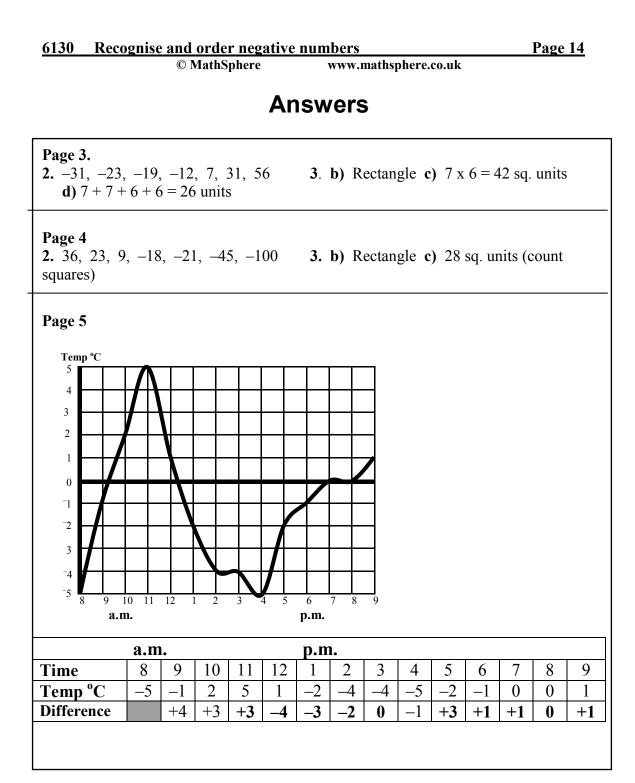


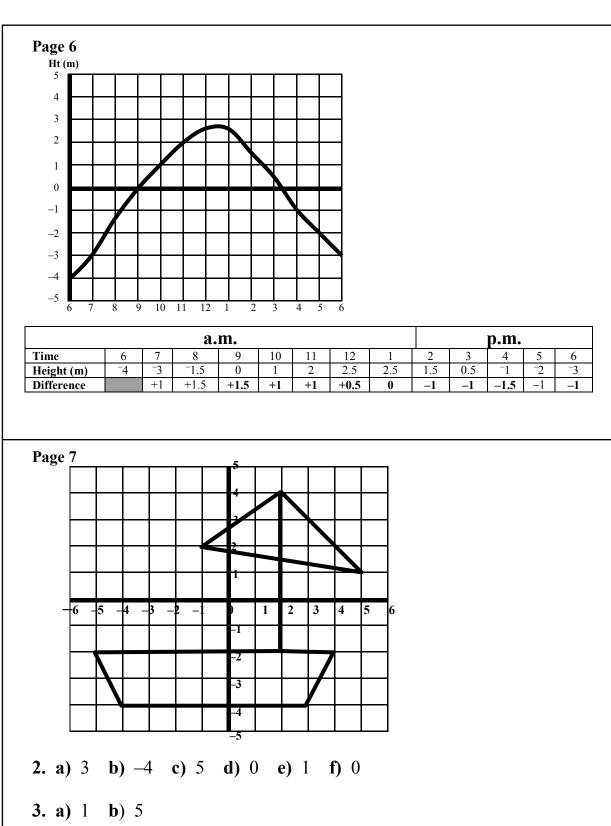
Work out your **errors** and put these in the table. Use a plus sign (e.g. **+12 mm**) when you overestimated and a negative sign (e.g. **-9mm**) when you underestimated.

What was your average (mean) error?







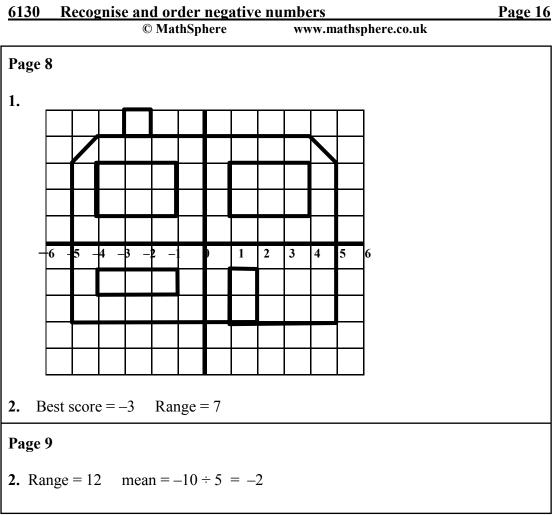


6130 Recognise and order negative numbers

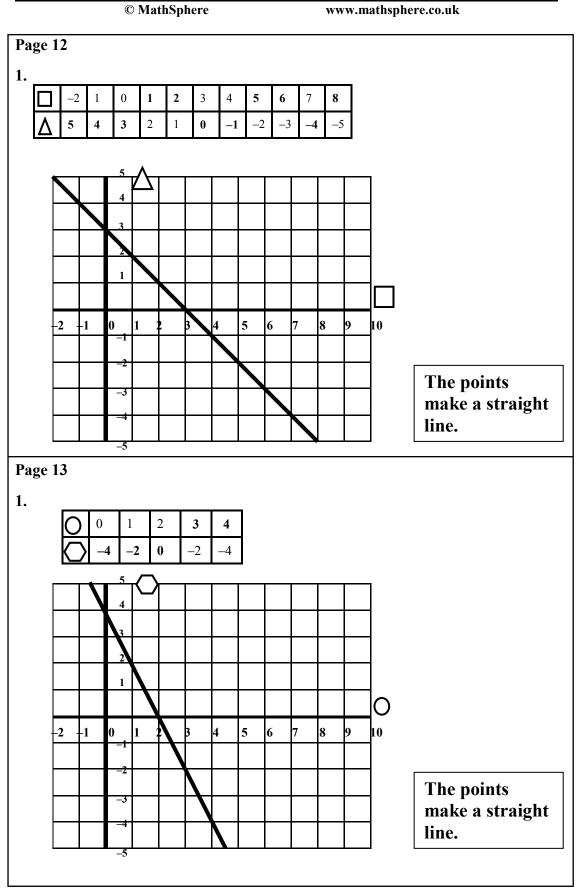
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Page 15



#### Page 16



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