

# Open Textbook Collaborative

<https://bit.ly/OpenTextCollabNJ>

A New Jersey Higher Education OER Project



## Open Textbook Collaborative Review

**OTC Title Under Review:** *Beginning Algebra Part I by Palma Benko, et al*

**OTC Title URL:** <https://opennj.net/beginning-algebra/all>

**Review Date and Author:** June 2023 by Allison Lucci of Rowan College of South Jersey

OER projects are rated for each criterion on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = very poor and 5 = excellent), generating a total score out of 55 with a brief explanation of the rating.

1. Comprehensiveness – 4.5

- a. The text covers all areas and ideas of the subject appropriately and can be easily navigated.

Students of all levels should be able to navigate through this textbook with ease.

- b. How do you rate the book's overall comprehensiveness?

The text seems to be very comprehensive. Some students may benefit from images or graphic representation. I have found it is hard for some to grasp ideas without graphics.

2. Content Accuracy – 4.5

- a. Content, including diagrams and other supplementary material, is accurate, error-free, and unbiased.

There are very few diagrams. This may benefit some learners and hinder others. I did not find any errors or see biases presented in the content. I read through at a medium pace and viewed most of the videos presented in my open math.

- b. Overall, how do you rate the accuracy of the content?

The content appears completely accurate.

3. Relevance/Longevity - 5

- a. Content is up-to-date, but not in a way that will quickly make the text obsolete within a short period of time. The text is written and/or arranged in such a way that necessary updates will be relatively easy and straightforward to implement.

I agree with this statement.

- b. Overall, how do you rate the relevance/longevity of the book?

Mathematics, algebra specifically, has not changed much if it all in my lifetime. This content should be relevant for decades, if not longer.

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## 4. Clarity - 5

- a. The text is written in lucid, accessible prose, and provides adequate context for any jargon/technical terminology used.

I do not feel jargon/technical terminology used will limit any students or instructors from utilizing this textbook.

- b. Overall, how do you rate the clarity of the book?

The language is very plain and clear. This will benefit users whose first language is not English.

## 5. Consistency - 5

- a. The text is internally consistent in terms of terminology and framework.

With respect to algebra, there seems to be internal consistency of terminology. There can be a lot built from this framework as it appears consistent throughout the text.

- b. How do you rate the overall consistency of the text?

This textbook is very consistent. Learning objectives are always given first, followed by definitions. Then, examples are given with diagrams as needed.

## 6. Modularity - 5

- a. The text is easily and readily divisible into smaller reading sections that can be assigned at different points within the course (i.e., enormous blocks of text without subheadings should be avoided). The text should not be overly self-referential, and should be easily reorganized, and realigned with various subunits of a course without presenting much disruption to the reader.

The textbook alone is highly modular. When using my open math, this is very easy to implement.

- b. Overall, how do you rate the modularity of the text?

I agree with this statement. Factors such as “enormous blocks of text without subheadings” allow for easy course customization. There is not too much text before the examples and practice problems begin.

## 7. Organization/Structure/Flow - 5

- a. The topics in the text are presented in a logical, clear fashion.

Textbook topics seem logically and clearly organized. The topics are also very clearly presented. Each topic seems to flow from one to another without discontinuity.

- b. Overall, how do you rate the organization/structure/flow of the text?

The organization, structure, and flow of the text are appealing. I feel most students would appreciate the simplicity of the structure. While I appreciate the flow tremendously, students will probably be more grateful for the organization.

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## 8. Interface - 5

- a. The text is free of significant interface issues, including navigation problems, distortion of images/charts, and any other display features that may distract or confuse the reader.
- b. Overall, how do you rate the textbook's interface?

No issues were noted such as navigation problems, distortion of images/charts, and other display features which may just try to confuse the reader.

## 9. Grammatical/Spelling Errors - 5

- a. The text contains no grammatical or spelling errors.

In addition to a lack of content errors, I did not notice any grammatical or spelling issues.

- b. How do you rate the grammar and spelling of the text?

Simple explanations go the furthest. The language of mathematics speaks for itself. No need to add convoluted descriptions.

## 10. Diversity and Inclusion – 4.5

- a. The text reflects diversity and inclusion regarding culture, gender, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, education, religion. It does not include insensitive or offensive language in these areas.

I did not read anything that I suspect someone would find offensive or insensitive based on culture, gender, ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, education, or religion.

- b. Overall, how do you rate the diversity and inclusion of the text?

From my perspective, the textbook is appealing to a diverse student body and instructors alike. Visual learners may not feel included due to the sparingly used simple graphics.

## 11. Recommendation

- a. Do you recommend this book?

Yes, I would recommend this textbook. This appears to be an asset to those teaching algebra. When I teach it, I start off with a simple explanation and build upon my previous discussion. This textbook provides a great scaffold for just that!

Rating: 53.5/55