

1086-VE-2800 **Kirsty Eisenhart*** (kirsty.eisenhart@wmich.edu), 3326 Everett Tower, Department of Mathematics, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5248. *Relearning algebra: Transitioning to learning mathematics with meaning*. Preliminary report.

The data discussed is part of a larger study undertaken to determine the degree to which course assessments in newly revised developmental mathematics courses reflected the overall goals of the courses, and the degree to which students were making the transition to thinking about mathematics in a meaningful way. The items that serve as the focus of this talk require students to use a given context to explain the practical meanings of a function at a particular point and the slope of a function. Despite the overall course emphasis on using real-world situations as a tool to understanding mathematics, a large portion of Algebra I students essentially ignored the given contexts. The analysis suggests that the specific context used in the task makes a difference, and perhaps students are more likely to abandon contexts with which they have less familiarity. Another issue not directly dealt with in this study is the differences in the ways real world contexts were utilized by different course instructors during class. Although all instructors were using the same text, and met weekly with the director to discuss the lesson goals, their implementation of the curriculum varied greatly. (Received September 25, 2012)