DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

Test A   Algebra

1. (a) $(-3)^4 = (-3)(-3)(-3)(-3) = 81$

(b) $-3^4 = -(3)(3)(3)(3) = -81$

(c) $3^{-4} = \dfrac{1}{3^4} = \dfrac{1}{81}$

(d) $\dfrac{5^{23}}{5^{21}} = 5^{23-21} = 5^2 = 25$

(e) $\left(\dfrac{2}{3}\right)^{-2} = \left(\dfrac{3}{2}\right)^2 = \dfrac{9}{4}$

(f) $16^{-3/4} = \dfrac{1}{16^{3/4}} = \dfrac{1}{\left(\sqrt[4]{16}\right)^3} = \dfrac{1}{2^3} = \dfrac{1}{8}$

2. (a) Note that $\sqrt{200} = \sqrt{100 \cdot 2} = 10\sqrt{2}$ and $\sqrt{32} = \sqrt{16 \cdot 2} = 4\sqrt{2}$. Thus $\sqrt{200} - \sqrt{32} = 10\sqrt{2} - 4\sqrt{2} = 6\sqrt{2}$.

(b) $(3a^3b^3)(4ab^2)^2 = 3a^3b^3 16a^2b^4 = 48a^5b^7$

(c) $\left(\dfrac{3x^{3/2}y^3}{x^2y^{-1/2}}\right)^{-2} = \left(\dfrac{x^2y^{-1/2}}{3x^{3/2}y^3}\right)^2 = \dfrac{(x^2y^{-1/2})^2}{(3x^{3/2}y^3)^2} = \dfrac{x^4y^{-1}}{9x^3y^6} = \dfrac{x^4}{9x^3y^6y} = \dfrac{x}{9y^7}$

3. (a) $3(x+6) + 4(2x-5) = 3x + 18 + 8x - 20 = 11x - 2$

(b) $(x+3)(4x-5) = 4x^2 - 5x + 12x - 15 = 4x^2 + 7x - 15$

(c) $\left(\sqrt{a} + \sqrt{b}\right)\left(\sqrt{a} - \sqrt{b}\right) = \left(\sqrt{a}\right)^2 - \sqrt{a}\sqrt{b} + \sqrt{a}\sqrt{b} - \left(\sqrt{b}\right)^2 = a - b$

Or: Use the formula for the difference of two squares to see that $\left(\sqrt{a} + \sqrt{b}\right)\left(\sqrt{a} - \sqrt{b}\right) = \left(\sqrt{a}\right)^2 - \left(\sqrt{b}\right)^2 = a - b$.

(d) $(2x+3)^2 = (2x+3)(2x+3) = 4x^2 + 6x + 6x + 9 = 4x^2 + 12x + 9$.

Note: A quicker way to expand this binomial is to use the formula $(a+b)^2 = a^2 + 2ab + b^2$ with $a = 2x$ and $b = 3$:
$(2x+3)^2 = (2x)^2 + 2(2x)(3) + 3^2 = 4x^2 + 12x + 9$

(e) See Reference Page 1 for the binomial formula $(a+b)^3 = a^3 + 3a^2b + 3ab^2 + b^3$. Using it, we get
$(x+2)^3 = x^3 + 3x^2(2) + 3x(2^2) + 2^3 = x^3 + 6x^2 + 12x + 8$.

4. (a) Using the difference of two squares formula, $a^2 - b^2 = (a+b)(a-b)$, we have
$4x^2 - 25 = (2x)^2 - 5^2 = (2x+5)(2x-5)$.

(b) Factoring by trial and error, we get $2x^2 + 5x - 12 = (2x - 3)(x + 4)$.

(c) Using factoring by grouping and the difference of two squares formula, we have
$x^3 - 3x^2 - 4x + 12 = x^2(x-3) - 4(x-3) = (x^2 - 4)(x-3) = (x-2)(x+2)(x-3)$.

(d) $x^4 + 27x = x(x^3 + 27) = x(x+3)(x^2 - 3x + 9)$

This last expression was obtained using the sum of two cubes formula, $a^3 + b^3 = (a+b)(a^2 - ab + b^2)$ with $a = x$ and $b = 3$. [See Reference Page 1 in the textbook.]

(e) The smallest exponent on x is $-\frac{1}{2}$, so we will factor out $x^{-1/2}$.
$3x^{3/2} - 9x^{1/2} + 6x^{-1/2} = 3x^{-1/2}(x^2 - 3x + 2) = 3x^{-1/2}(x-1)(x-2)$

(f) $x^3y - 4xy = xy(x^2 - 4) = xy(x-2)(x+2)$

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Table of Contents Essential Calculus Stewart Manual

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    - The Rise of Digital Reading Essential Calculus Stewart Manual
    - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Essential Calculus Stewart Manual
    - Exploring Different Genres
    - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
    - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
    - Popular eBook Platforms
    - Features to Look for in an Essential Calculus Stewart Manual
    - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Essential Calculus Stewart Manual
    - Personalized Recommendations
    - Essential Calculus Stewart Manual User Reviews and Ratings
    - Essential Calculus Stewart Manual and Bestseller Lists
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