

Math-3  
Lesson 1-5

Exponential Function

# The “Parent” Exponential Function

$$y = b^x$$

← exponent  
← base

$$y = 2^x \quad (\text{base 2 exponential function})$$

$$y = 3^x \quad (\text{base 3 exponential function})$$

$$y = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^x \quad (\text{base 1/2 exponential function})$$

**The base MUST BE positive and CANNOT equal 1.**

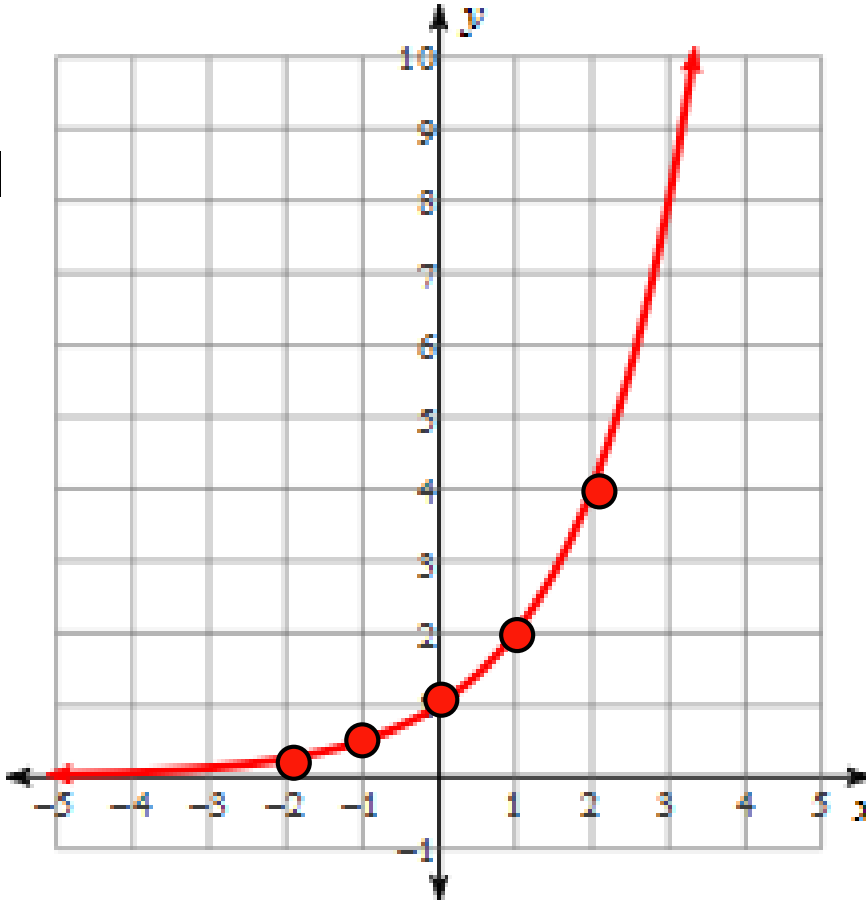
$$b = (0, 1) \cup (1, \infty)$$

Fill in the output values of the table and graph the points.

$$f(x) = 2^x$$

Growth Factor is the base of the exponential

x	$2^{( )}$	y
-2	$2^{-2}$	0.25
-1	$2^{-1}$	0.5
0	$2^0$	1
1	$2^1$	2
2	$2^2$	4



$$\left(\frac{2}{1}\right)^{-2} = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^2 = \frac{1}{4} = 0.25$$

“negative exponent property”

$$2^0 = 1$$

“zero exponent property”

# Exponential Function $f(x) = 2^x$

Will the 'y' value ever reach zero (on the left end of the graph)?

As the denominator gets bigger and bigger, the decimal version of the fraction gets smaller and smaller.

x	$2^{(\quad)}$	y
-1	$2^{(-1)}$	$1/2$
-2	$2^{(-2)}$	$1/4$
-3	$2^{(-3)}$	$1/8$
-4	$2^{(-4)}$	$1/16$
-5	$2^{(-5)}$	$1/32$

$$f(-1) = 1/2$$

$$f(-2) = 1/4$$

$$f(-3) = 1/8$$

$$f(-4) = 1/16$$

$$f(-5) = 1/32$$

'y' gets closer and closer to zero but never reaches zero.

Horizontal Asymptote: a horizontal line the graph approaches but never reaches.

$$y = 0$$

*Domain* = ?

$$x = (-\infty, \infty)$$

*range* = ?

$$y = (0, \infty)$$

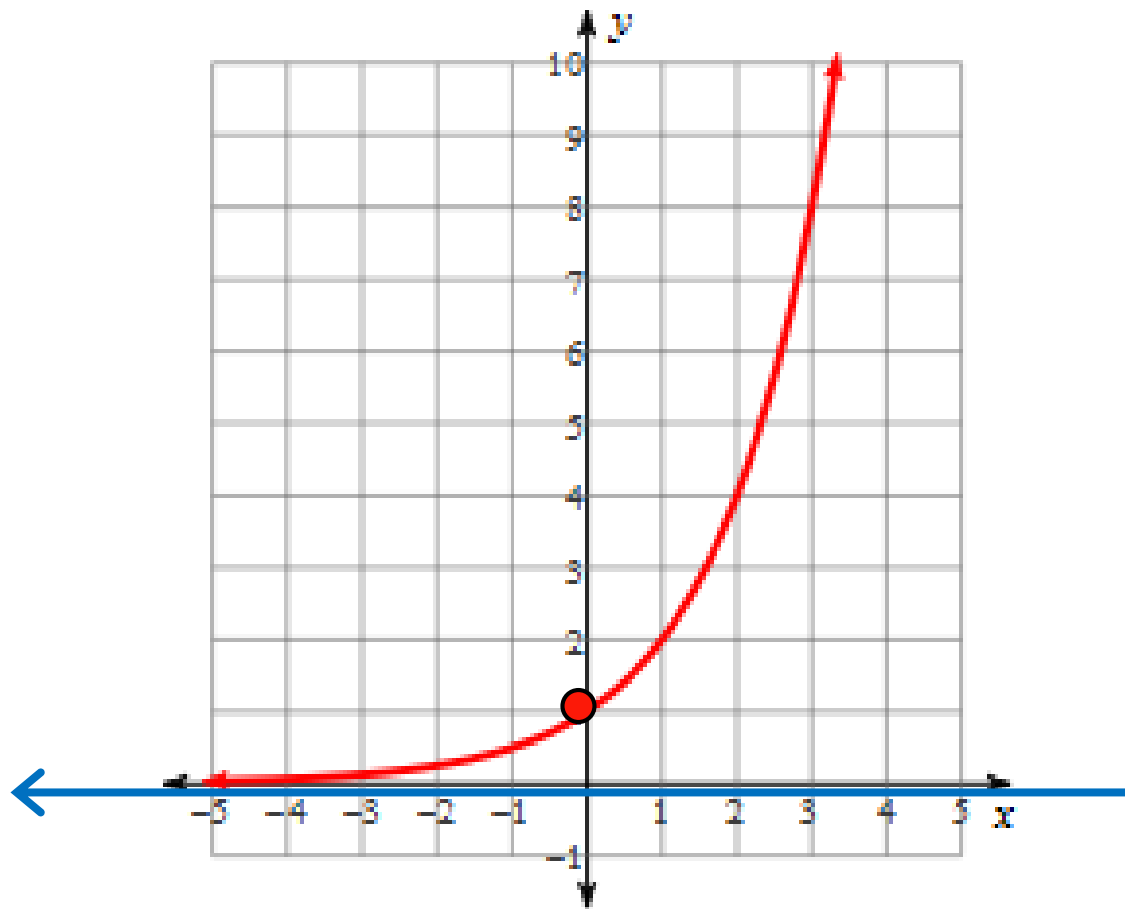
Parentheses on left end of the interval → range does include  $y = 0$

y-intercept = ?

$$f(0) = y \text{ intercept}$$

$$f(0) = 2^0 = 1$$

$$f(x) = 2^x$$



Exponential Growth: the graph is increasing (as you go from left to right the graph goes upward). Growth occurs when the base of the exponential is greater than 1.

$$y = b^x$$

'b' > 1 → growth

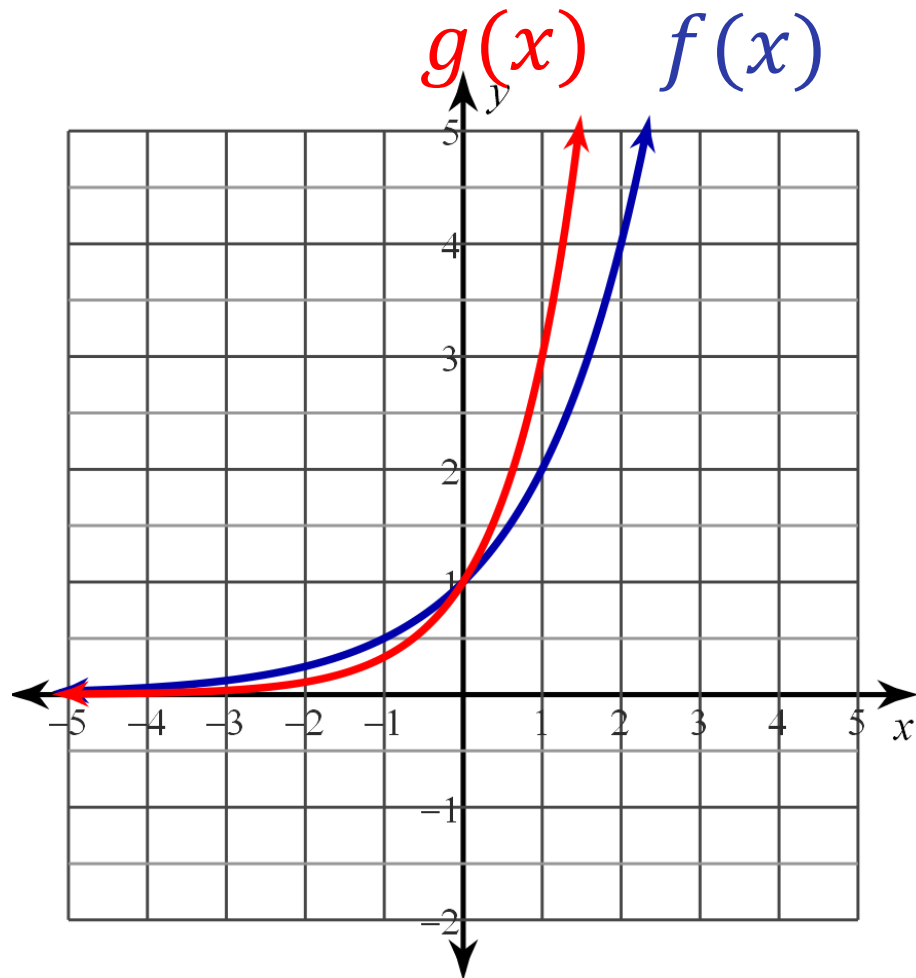
$$f(x) = 2^x \quad g(x) = 3^x$$

Why do both graphs have the same y-intercept?

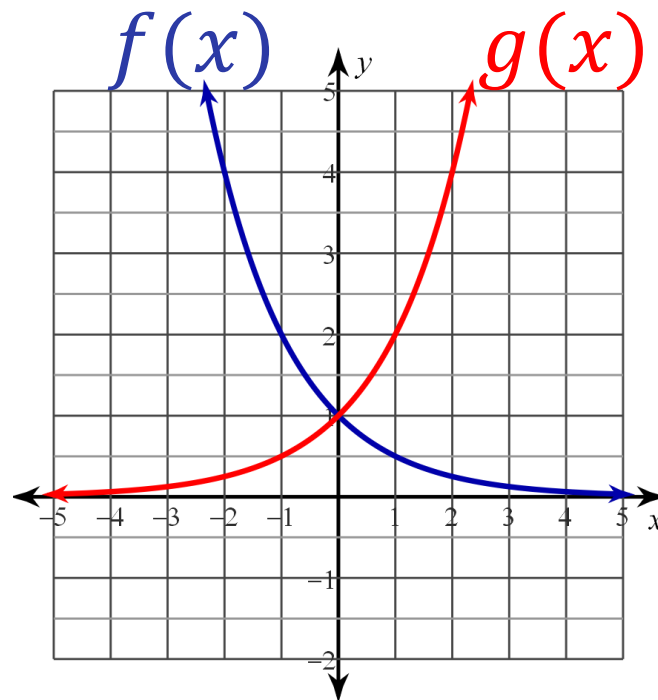
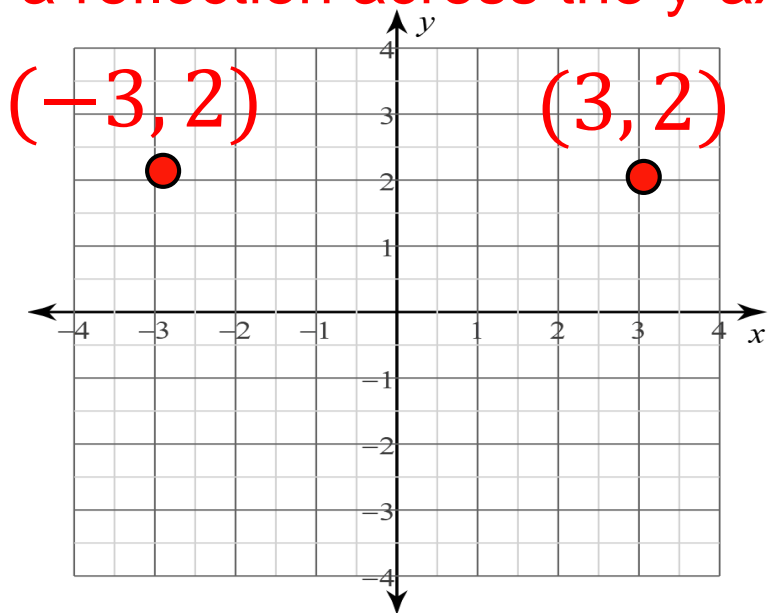
$$f(0) = 2^0 = 1$$

$$g(0) = 3^0 = 1$$

All exponential "parent functions" have (0, 1) as the y-intercept.



→ Replacing 'x' with '(-x)' causes a reflection across the y-axis



$g(x) = 2^x$  → Reflect across the y-axis

$$f(x) = 2^{-x}$$

$$f(x) = (2^{-1})^x$$

$$f(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^x$$

Exponent of a Power  
Property of Exponents

Negative Exponent  
Property of Exponents

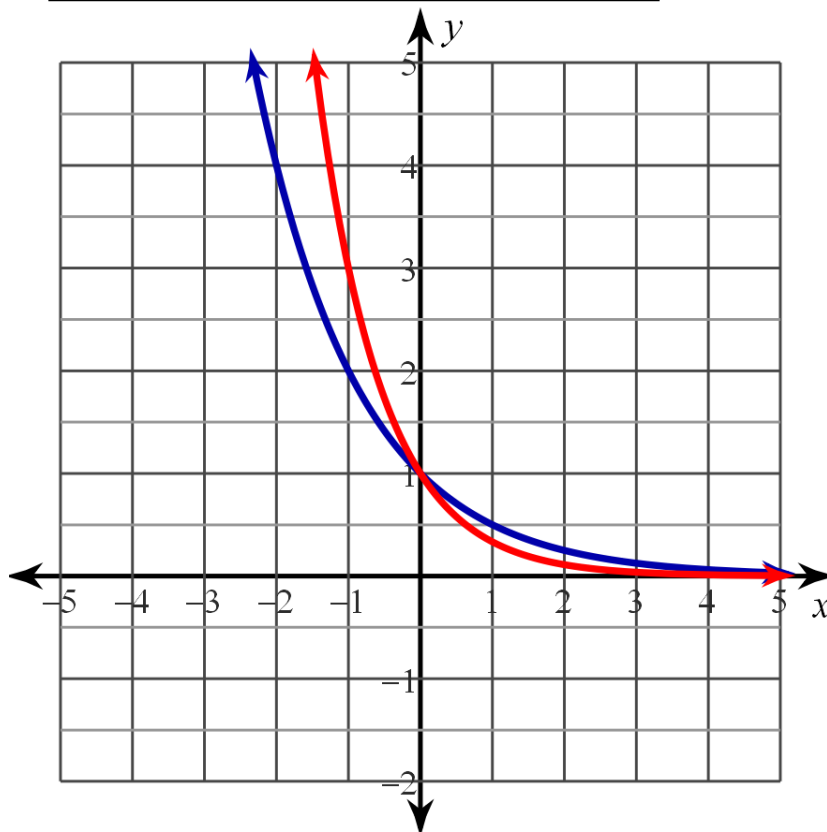
Exponential Decay: the graph is decreasing (as you go from left to right the graph goes downward). This occurs when the base of the exponential is between 0 and 1.

$$y = b^x$$

$0 < 'b' < 1 \rightarrow \text{decay}$

$$f(x) = \left(\frac{1}{2}\right)^x$$

$$g(x) = \left(\frac{1}{3}\right)^x$$





$$f(x) = b^x$$

Can the base be zero?

$$b \neq 0$$

$$g(x) = (0)^x$$

x	y
-1	$1/0 = ??$
0	???
1	0

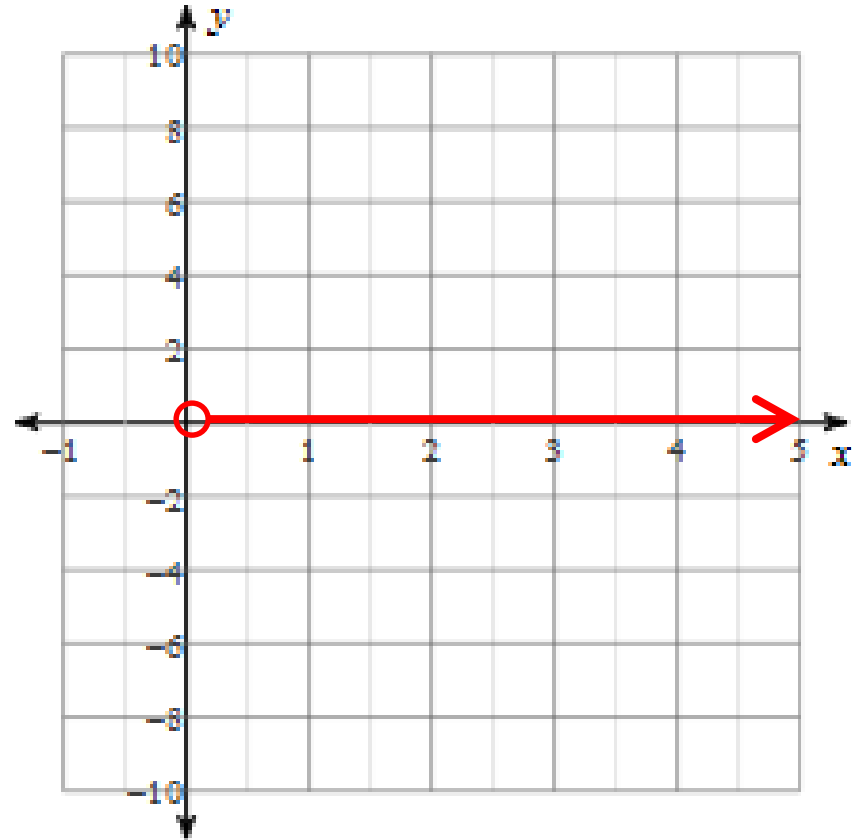
$$g(-1) = \left(\frac{0}{1}\right)^{-1}$$

$$g(-1) = \left(\frac{1}{0}\right)^1$$

$$g(0) = (0)^0$$

$= 0? \quad = 1?$

$$g(1) = (0)^1$$



→ negative number input values are not “mapped” to an output value.

→ input value “0” has an ambiguous output value

→ Any positive number input value is “mapped” to “0”

Can the 'base' be negative?

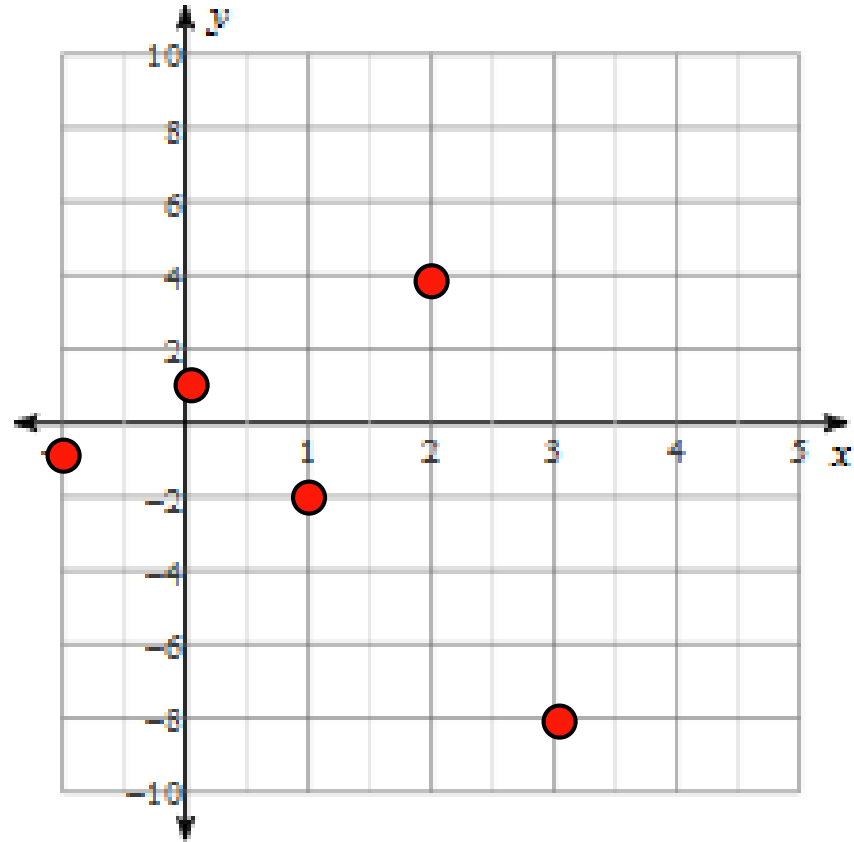
$$g(x) = (-2)^x$$

x	y	
-1	-0.5	$(-2)^{-1}$
0	1	$(-2)^0$
$\frac{1}{2}$	$i = ?$	$(-2)^{\frac{1}{2}} = \sqrt{-2}$
1	-2	$(-2)^1$
2	4	$(-2)^2$
3	-8	$(-2)^3$

$$f(x) = ab^x$$

'b' > 1 → growth

0 < 'b' < 1 → decay



**b ≠ negative numbers**

Can the base be 1?

$$f(x) = ab^x$$

$$g(x) = (1)^x \quad b \neq 1$$

x	y
-1	1
0	1
1	1

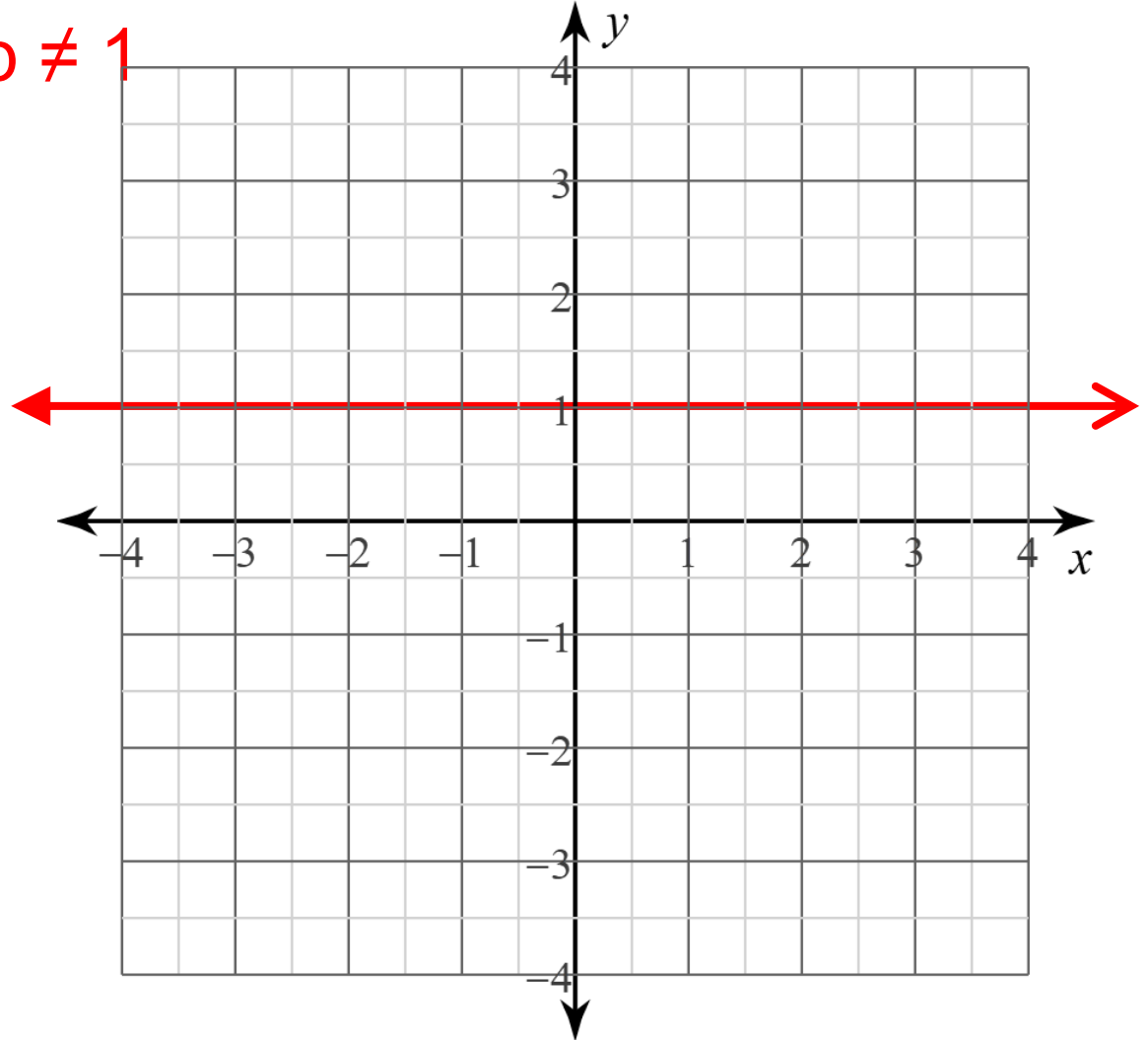
$$(1)^{-1}$$

$$(1)^0$$

$$1^1$$

$$0 < b < 1, \text{ OR } b > 1$$

$$b = (0,1) \cup (1,\infty)$$



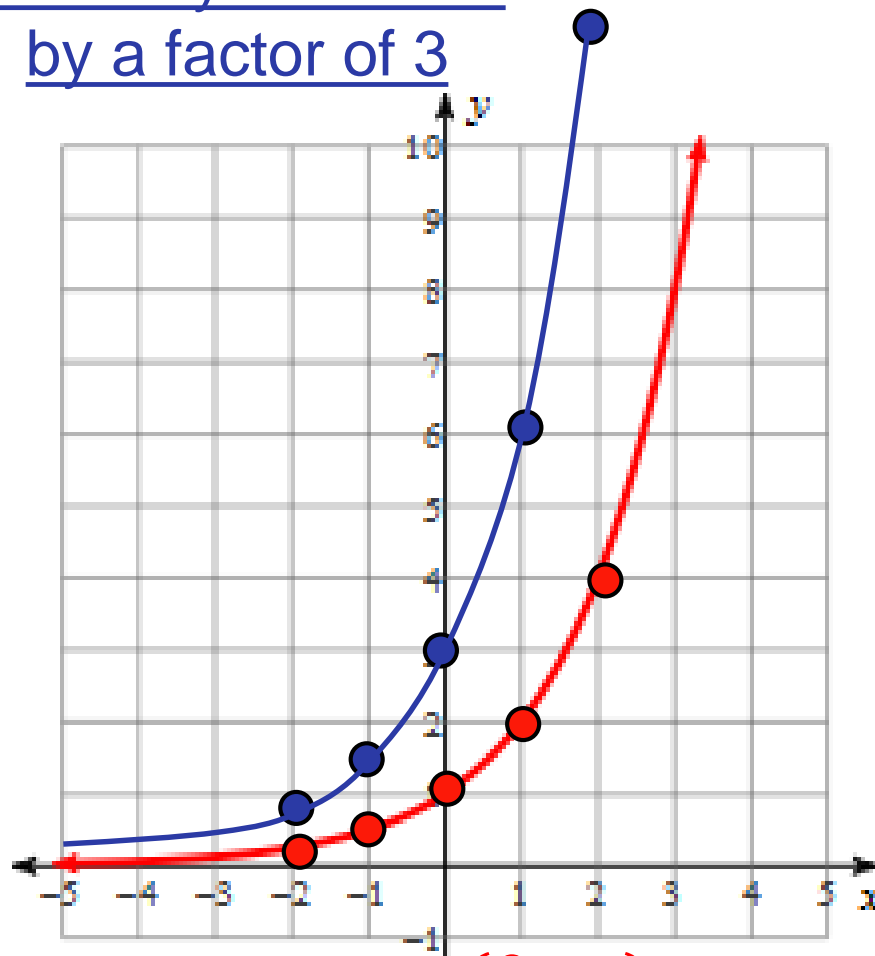
$$f(x) = 2^x \quad g(x) = 3(2)^x$$

x	$2^x$	f(x)	g(x)
-2	$2^{-2}$	0.25	0.75
-1	$2^{-1}$	0.5	1.5
0	$2^0$	1	3
1	$2^1$	2	6
2	$2^2$	4	12

Horizontal asymptote:  $y = 0$

Domain = ?  $x = (-\infty, \infty)$

Vertically stretched  
by a factor of 3



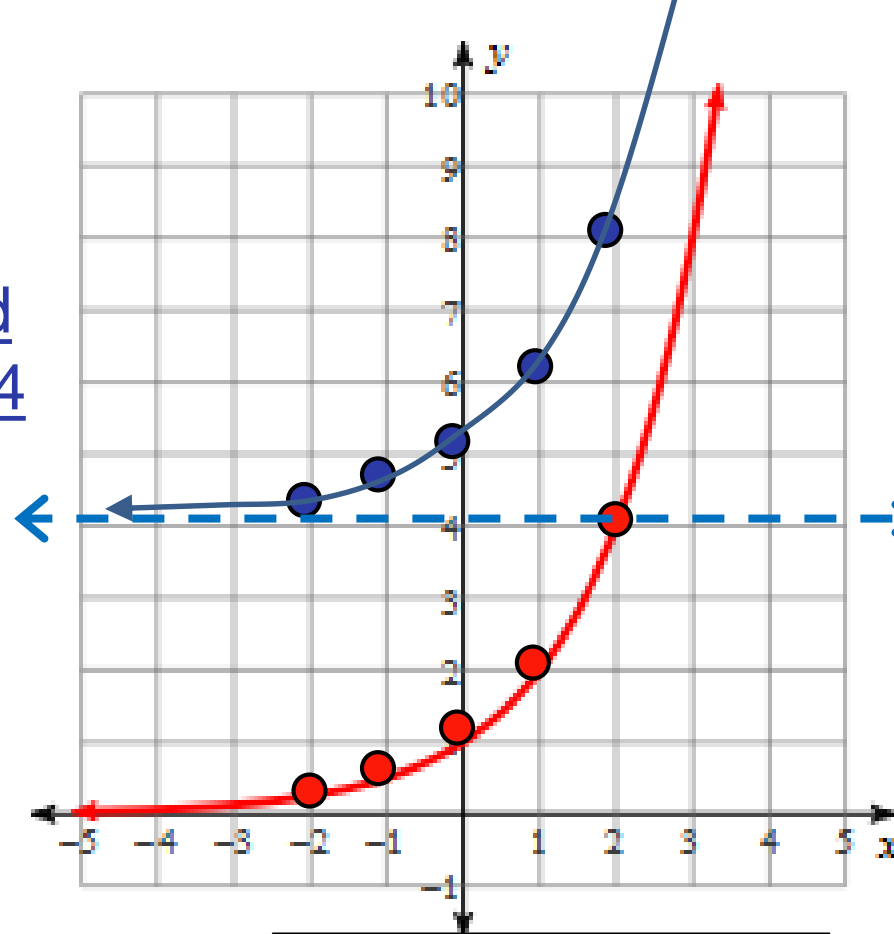
range = ?  $y = (0, \infty)$

y-intercept = ?  $f(x): (0, 1)$   
 $g(x): (0, 3)$

$$f(x) = 2^x \quad k(x) = 2^x + 4$$

x	$2^x$	f(x)	k(x)
-2	$2^{-2}$	0.25	4.25
-1	$2^{-1}$	0.5	4.5
0	$2^0$	1	5
1	$2^1$	2	6
2	$2^2$	4	8

Shifted UP by 4



Horizontal asymptote:

$$f(x): y = 0$$

$$g(x): y = 4$$

Domain = ?

$$x = (-\infty, \infty)$$

$$x = (-\infty, \infty)$$

range = ?

$$f(x): y = (0, \infty)$$

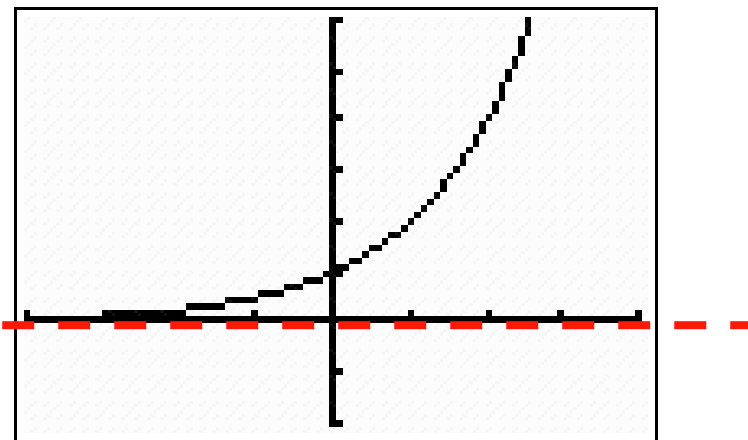
$$g(x): y = (4, \infty)$$

y-intercept = ?

$$f(x): (0, 1)$$

$$g(x): (0, 5)$$

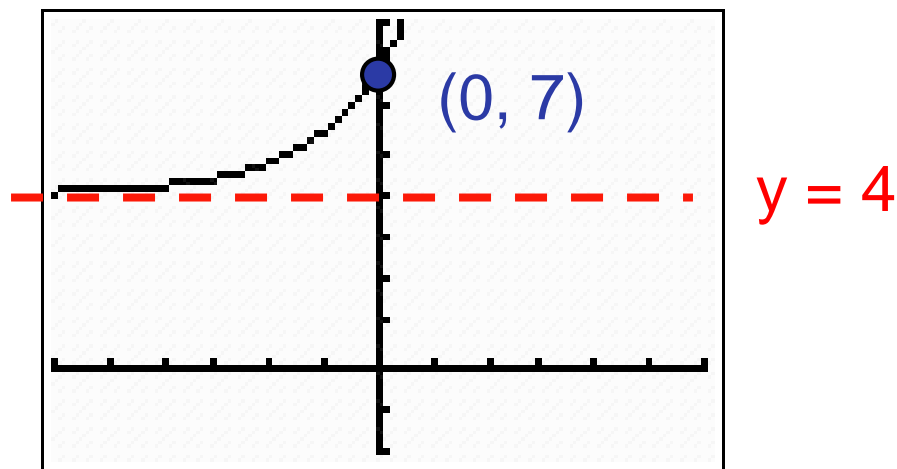
# Transformations of the Exponential Function



Up 4 shift

$$h(x) = 3(2)^x + 4$$

VSF = 3



$f(x) = 2^x$  Base-2 Exponential Parent Function

## Transformation Form of the Exponential Function

$$y = ab^x + k$$

VSF

y-intercept:  $(0, a + k)$

$$h(0) = 3(2)^0 + 4$$

$$h(0) = 7$$

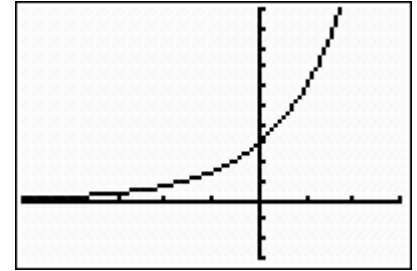
vertical shift and horizontal Asymptote

Growth Factor (the base of the exponential)

Horiz. asympt:  $y = k$

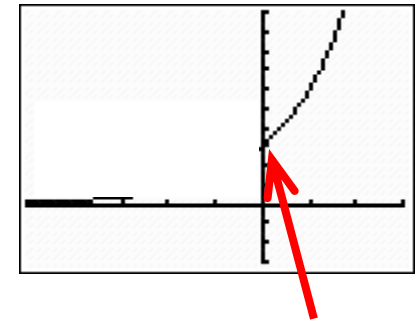
$$y = 4$$

Initial Value: (of the exponential) is the vertical stretch factor (*for problems with no up/down shifts*)



If in input is time (“stopwatch time”) the initial value occurs when  $t = 0$ .

$$f(t) = 3(2)^t \quad \text{Domain: } x = [0, \infty)$$



$$f(0) = 3(2)^0 = ?$$

$$f(0) = 3$$

What is the initial value of:  $f(t) = 0.5(3)^t$

## What is the equation of the graph?

1) Start with the general transformation equation.  $g(x) = ab^x + k$

2) Find the value of 'k' (this is the horizontal asymptote).

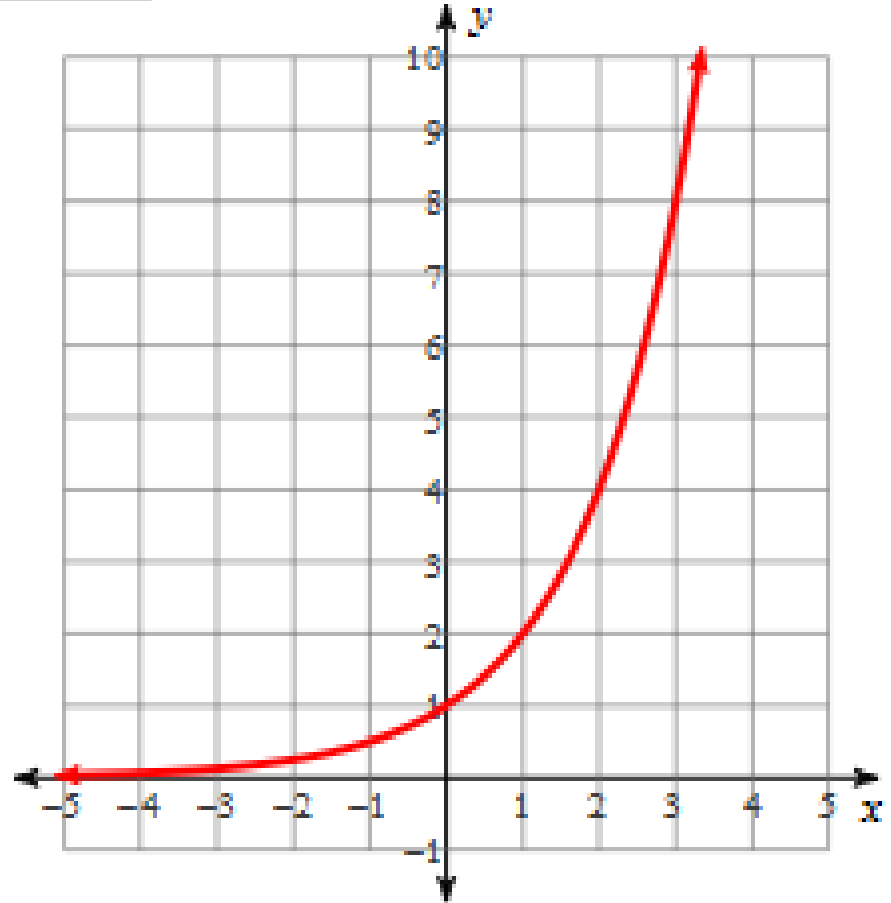
$$g(x) = ab^x + \textcircled{k}$$

Horizontal asymptote:  $y = 0$

$$k = 0$$

Rewrite the equation.

$$g(x) = ab^x + k \quad \rightarrow \quad y = ab^x$$





$$g(x) = ab^x + k \rightarrow y = ab^x$$

3) y-intercept

Substitute (0, 1) into the equation.

$$\text{Solve for 'a'} \quad a = 1$$

Rewrite the equation

$$y = ab^x \rightarrow \boxed{y = b^x}$$

4) Substitute a "nice" x-y pair from the graph into the equation.

Substitute (1, 2) into the equation.

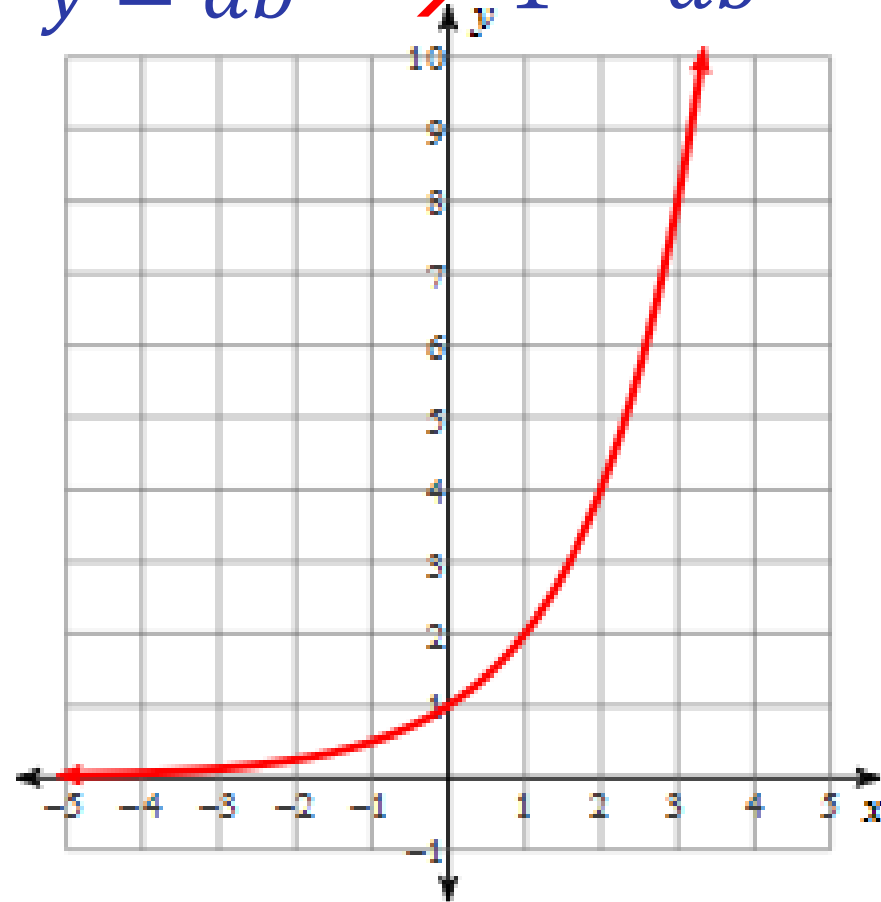
$$y = b^x \rightarrow 2 = b^1$$

$$\text{Solve for 'b'} \quad b = 2$$

Rewrite the equation

$$\boxed{y = 2^x}$$

$$y = ab^x \rightarrow 1 = ab^0$$



## Converting the graph into an equation

1) Start with  $g(x) = ab^x + k$

2) Find the value of 'k'  
(horizontal asymptote).  $k = 0$

$$g(x) = ab^x + k \rightarrow y = ab^x$$

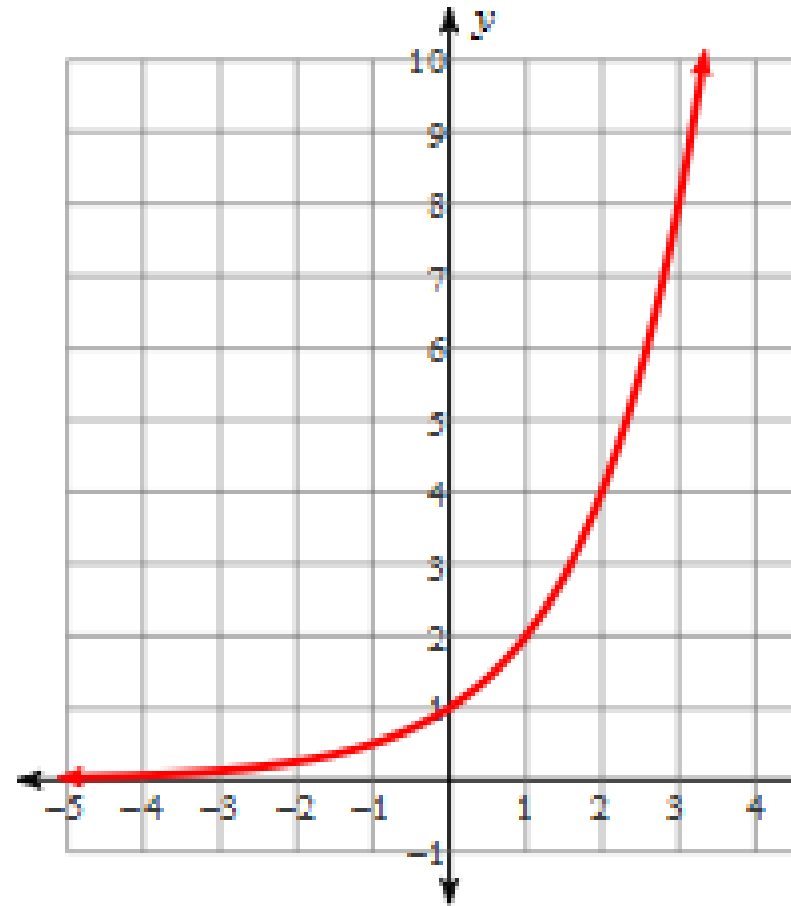
3) Substitute the y-intercept

$$(0, 1) \rightarrow y = ab^x \rightarrow 1 = ab^0$$

$$\rightarrow a = 1 \rightarrow y = b^x$$

4) Substitute a "nice" x-y pair from the graph into the equation (then simplify)

$$(1, 2) \rightarrow y = b^x \rightarrow 2 = b^1 \rightarrow b = 2 \rightarrow y = 2^x$$



## What is the equation of the graph?

1) Start with

$$g(x) = ab^x + k$$

2) Find 'k'

Horizontal asymptote:  $y = 3$

$$k = 3$$

$$y = ab^x + 3$$

3) Substitute the y-intercept

$$(0, 4) \rightarrow 4 = ab^0 + 3$$

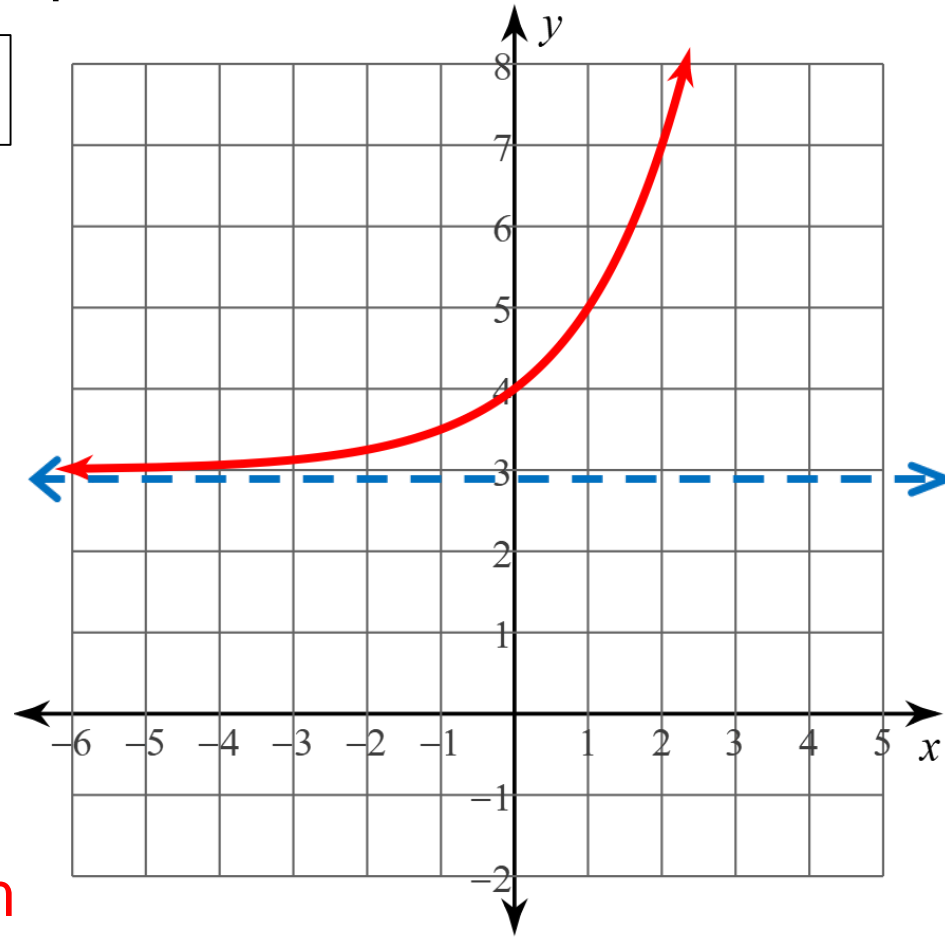
$$a = 1 \rightarrow$$

$$y = b^x + 3$$

4) Substitute a "nice" x-y pair from the graph into the equation.

$$(1, 5) \rightarrow 5 = b^1 + 3 \rightarrow b = 2$$

$$y = 2^x + 3$$



What is the equation of the graph?

1) Start with

$$g(x) = ab^x + k$$

2) horizontal asymptote  $y = 1$

$$k = 1$$

$$y = ab^x + 1$$

3) y-intercept  $(0, 4)$   $4 = ab^0 + 1$

$$a = 3 \quad y = 3b^x + 1$$

4) "Nice" x-y pair  $(-1, 7)$

$$7 = 3b^{-1} + 1$$

$$6 = 3b^{-1}$$

$$2 = b^{-1} \quad 2 = \frac{1}{b} \quad b = \frac{1}{2}$$

$$y = 3 \left( \frac{1}{2} \right)^x + 1$$

