In this age of technology, there is a growing need for mathematicians, scholars, teachers, and students. Unfortunately, there is a lack of math majors across the country. Why is this happening? The most influential technology in the lives of many students is television. Television affects students on a daily basis. Students apply what they see on TV to their lives without being aware of it. As mathematicians educators we should ask, "How is mathematics being presented on television?"

One of the most popular cartoons that young students like is "Spongebob Square Pants." The name of the show misrepresents the definition of a square. When students listen to the name and look at the cartoon they might think, "Oh, that's what a square looks like!", but the shape of Spongebob's pants is rectangular. As youngsters, their early education is important to create a foundation for more advanced concepts. However, if the foundation is not stable in a subject area, then students may become discouraged about the subject. In this case, the young students will learn that a square looks like a rectangle, but on the contrary, a square contains properties of a rectangle but not all rectangles can be considered squares.

Most teenagers love to watch movies. The blockbuster movie, "A Beautiful Mind," is well known in mathematical society. A lot of teachers request you for next year? You're my favorite teacher."

The first year, anyone will tell you, is very trying. When I have asked "Courtney" to please stop talking and pay attention about 10 times in one forty minute period, or when "Michael" just won't give up being the class clown, all while I'm trying to teach them how to solve algebraic fractions, I really feel like pulling my hair out (or theirs). But there is no feeling like hearing "Jamie" say, "Ms. Saborido, can I have a truly marvelous demonstration of the subject. In this case, the young students will learn that a square looks like a rectangle, but on the contrary, a square contains properties of a rectangle but not all rectangles can be considered squares.

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The theorem states that the equation $x^n + y^n = z^n$, where $n$ is an integer greater than 2, has no integer solutions for $x, y$ and $z$. It is known that there are infinitely many integer solutions that satisfy the equation $x^2 + y^2 = z^2$. The next question would be, "Are there also integer solutions that satisfy the equation for all powers of $n$?"

Many great mathematicians tried to prove that Fermat's Last Theorem was correct. The case where $n = 3$ was proven by Euler in 1770, but his proof was incomplete. The case where $n = 4$ is elementary and was done by Fermat himself. The case where $n = 5$ was proven both by Diophantus's Arithmetica, a Greek text on number theory, but left the world for many years puzzled because he decided not to provide a proof. Under the problem, he wrote, "I have a truly marvelous demonstration of this proposition which this margin is too narrow to contain." Unfortunately, Fermat died before ever providing the proof of the theorem. As a result, this infamous theorem is known as Fermat's Last Theorem.

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About 350 years ago, a French mathematician named Pierre de Fermat proposed a simple looking theorem in the margin of Diophantus's Arithmetica, a Greek text on number theory, but left the world for many years puzzled because he decided not to provide a proof. Under the problem, he wrote, "I have a truly marvelous demonstration of this proposition which this margin is too narrow to contain." Unfortunately, Fermat died before ever providing the proof of the theorem. As a result, this infamous theorem is known as Fermat's Last Theorem.

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University that he had proved Fermat’s Last Theorem. Although the mathematical community did not accept his first draft of the proof, they accepted the revised version of Wiles’ proof in September of 1994. According to Andrew Wiles, “I don’t believe Fermat had a proof. I think he fooled himself into thinking he had a proof. But what has made this problem special for amateurs is that there’s a tiny possibility that there does exist an elegant 17th-century proof.”

Top Ten Things to Remember in Your Job Search

By: Sylvia Liu

TIME 2000 students attended LIMAÇON, a professional conference for mathematics teachers, at SUNY, Old Westbury, on March 12, 2004. TIME 2000 was the largest undergraduate group in attendance. After the keynote address by NCTM President, Johnny Lott, the participants attended three sessions. Of the three sessions I attended, I found the “Top Ten Things to Remember in Your Job Search” the most important and useful. All of us will eventually be looking for a job and I know that many students are dreading the résumé and interview. Richard A. Kollar, from SCOPE, suggested the top ten things to remember in your job search. Whether you’re a freshman or a senior, it’s time to be prepared.

1. Be yourself and smile. Have a sense of humor. Show off your warmth and passion.

2. Be a good listener. If you have a question about the question you’ve been asked, keep the eye on the interviewers’ faces. Make them feel as if they’re part of the answer. Don’t jump into a hard question. Let the person finish their question and think for a moment to enhance your answer. If you don’t know the answer, a good response is, “I’m not familiar with that topic. It would be something I will research.” Maintain composure. Remember that when you’re a teacher, you must be able to handle situations.

3. Improve your posture. Take your coat off and relax. Follow the directions. Be attentive. Are you hands on or off the table? Are you shaking your leg?

4. Remember the goal. No matter what, be prepared for job interviews. Have the most current experience and work with them.

5. Prepare yourself. Use a mirror. Think and proofread. Be sure that your résumé focuses on the most recent experience and work. If you have an updated resume, call the secret ary and fax it in. Make sure to be prepared. If you have an updated resume, they’re part of the answer. Don’t jump into a hard question. Let the person finish their question and think for a moment to enhance your answer. If you don’t know the answer, a good response is, “I’m not familiar with that topic. It would be something I will research.” Maintain composure. Remember that when you’re a teacher, you must be able to handle situations.

6. Last but not least, select the approach that best facilitates their learning.

Reflections of TIME Presents: Dr. Eddy

By: Venessa Singhroy

The most recent addition to the TIME 2000 staff is Dr. Jennifer Eddy. Her extensive experience, academic training and personal style make her an approachable teacher and a great fit for the TIME 2000 students currently taking Multicultural Education.

Dr. Eddy is particularly attentive to highlighting this aspect of the course because her prior experiences as a student who had mathematical apprehensions has made her empathetic towards those students who experience similar difficulties. She describes an initial aversion to mathematics engendered by instructors using a regimented approach to teaching during her grammar school years. “That kind of stress can make someone feel so bad, that they even do poorly on subjects they like! I didn’t want that to happen to anybody, so I use approaches that help all kinds of learners...give them freedom to make mistakes and let them know that it’s ok and part of the process,” says Dr. Eddy. It was not until her graduate studies at the University of South Florida and Columbia Teachers College, after certain theoretical courses required an in depth analysis of the structures of language using sophisticated computers, that she began to feel comfortable in mathematics and realized an aptness in it that she had thought she lacked.

As a result, Dr. Eddy emphasizes the importance of offering multiple approaches to learning, especially to students. According to her, we should, “Look at our approach to content, how we like to organize information; some people like a linear format while others tolerate ambiguity better. I looked at it as we have different ways of organizing thoughts and we should not be closed off if [students] think there is one way to learn it.” After providing students with various approaches, she stresses that it is then their responsibility to select the approach that best facilitates their learning.

To convey these concepts, Dr. Eddy integrates her personal interests as well as her training into her lessons. For example, her knowledge of psycholinguistics and second language acquisition coupled with her affinity for the Spanish language provide her with invaluable insight about the dynamics involved in teaching to a culturally diversified group. In her opinion, “If a teacher has experience in learning another language [he/she] has a better perspective on meaning and thought...[and can add to repertoire.]” Other interests include a love of theatre that began as a child when her mother, a director and choreographer of her own musical theater company, introduced her to different musicals and encouraged her participation. Dr. Eddy says of her style of instruction, “there is an aspect of performance there,” as she lists musicals that are among her personal favorites, including ‘Singing in the Rain’, ‘West Side Story’ and all musical productions by Rogers and Hammerstein. Dr. Eddy expresses having found her niche here at Queens College and enjoys the courses that she teaches. Speaking of TIME 2000 students in particular, she says, “What [students] think there is one way to learn it.” After providing students with various approaches, she stresses that it is then their responsibility to select the approach that best facilitates their learning.

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