



Math Mole

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Test Day, The Sequel

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- Today's Editors: Tim W. & Ellie
- Tuesday: Kia & Aly

Quotes:

Anyone who cannot cope with mathematics is not fully human. At best he is a tolerable subhuman who has learned to wear shoes, bathe, and not make messes in the house. –Robert Heinlein, [Ed. Note: I'm not necessarily condoning this. In fact, it sounds a little like something Hitler might have said.]

Proof is an idol before whom the pure mathematician tortures himself. – Arthur Stanley Eddington

Puzzles:

One: One of three switches on the ground floor of a building turns on a lamp in the attic. Your job is to find out which of the three switches works the lamp, but you are allowed only one trip to the attic to check the light. Can you figure out how to tell which light switch works?

Two: There is a secret word hidden in this matrix of letters. Can you discover it?

R	V	E	O	V	C
S	I	O	V	R	D
V	E	R	C	V	O
R	O	V	E	S	E
E	R	S	C	R	I
C	E	R	E	O	R

Mathematician of the Day



Srinivasa Ramanujan – 22 December 1887-26 April 1920, India

- S. Ramanujan was an Indian mathematician who studied under G. H. Hardy at Cambridge during WWI.
- Born poor in southern India, Ramanujan excelled in math as a child and earned a scholarship to study at Government College in Kumbakonam. He didn't enjoy subjects that were not math, however, and he failed most of them due to lack of study. He lost his scholarship as a result.
- Ramanujan tried twice and failed to receive his college degree, and he lived in poverty as he continued his mathematical research.
- In July, 1909, he married a nine year old. A little strange.
- Ramanujan took a ship from India to England in 1914, where he arrived to study at Cambridge with the mathematician G.H. Hardy. Ramanujan spent four unhappy years in England, away from his family and native India; but they were remarkably prolific years, mathematically speaking.
- A devout Brahmin, Ramanujan was required to give up his caste when he left Indian soil. This caused him great anguish and probably contributed to the poor health he developed while in England. The lack of fresh vegetables in wartime England also had something to do with his bad health, as Ramanujan was a vegetarian.
- In 1919, Ramanujan returned to India and he died shortly thereafter from tuberculosis and a vitamin deficiency. His notebooks, filled with mathematical results that are still being deciphered and studied, are seen as some of the greatest accomplishments ever achieved by an amateur mathematician.
- An interesting anecdote is told about the Ramanujan-Hardy number, which is the smallest number that can be written two different ways as the sum of two cubes. The R-H is a four-digit number that is Tim Weatherall's favorite number, and is, in fact, his ATM PIN.