

MATH 1300, Mathematical Explorations

Lockhart's Lament

Activity

- Class discussion on the reading - you could give an easy quiz to ensure students complete the reading first. You could also have students complete the assignment given below before class.
 - What resonated with you most?
 - What surprised you most? What did you disagree with?
 - Are the criticisms of school mathematics realistic? Are his assumptions about the beauty of mathematics as an art form realistic? - could students appreciate this?
 - Is what we're doing in this class a reasonable antidote?
 - What have been your best experiences with mathematics (prior to this course!)?

Notes

This is a good reading for students mid way through or towards the end of the semester.

A class discussion may not take an entire class (especially if it is 75mins).

Assignments

1. Read Paul Lockhart's "A Mathematician's Lament". Write an essay (2 pages) on how Lockhart's perception of mathematics vs. math class reflects (or does not reflect?) your experiences in math classes. How has your perspective on math changed throughout your life? Do you remember the first time you decided that math (or at least math class) was stupid/pointless/not worth paying attention to? Has anything changed since then (prior to this class)? (Expected length: 500 words.)

References and resources

[A Mathematician's Lament](#)