

Favorite Quotes

“Mathematics is not a careful march down a well-cleared highway, but a journey into a strange wilderness, where the explorers often get lost. Rigor should be a signal to the historian that the maps have been made and the real explorers have gone elsewhere.” – W. S. Anglin, “Mathematics and History”

“Obvious is the most dangerous word in mathematics.” – E.T. Bell

"The cowards never start and the weak die along the way." - Kit Carson

“Snipers aren't deadly because they carry the biggest guns; they're deadly because they've learned how to *weaponize math*.” – Cracked

“A mathematician is a blind man in a dark room looking for a black cat which isn't there.” - Charles Darwin

“If 10 years from now, when you are doing something quick and dirty, you suddenly visualize that I am looking over your shoulders and say to yourself: 'Dijkstra would not have liked this', well that would be enough immortality for me.” - Edsger W. Dijkstra

“Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution.” - Theodosius Dobzhansky

“Mathematics, of course, has been spectacularly successful in [determining planetary orbits, in understanding the world of computers, or, for that matter, in balancing your checkbook]. But it was not its worldly utility that led Euclid or Archimedes or Georg Cantor to devote so much of their energy and genius to mathematics. These individuals did not feel compelled to justify their work with utilitarian applications any more than Shakespeare had to apologize for writing love sonnets instead of cookbooks or van Gogh had to apologize for painting canvases instead of billboards.” - William Dunham, *Journey Through Genius*

“Proof is an idol before whom the pure mathematician tortures himself.” – Sir Arthur Eddington

“If we knew what we were doing it wouldn't be research.” - Albert Einstein

“If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.” – Albert Einstein

“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” - Albert Einstein

“God wrote the universe in the language of mathematics.” Galileo Galilei

“Mathematics is not only real, but it is the only reality.” - Martin Gardner

“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, *Time Enough for Love*

“Those who approach life like a child playing a game, moving and pushing pieces, possess the power of kings.” - Heraclitus of Ephesus, ~500 BC

“The secret to genius is to carry to spirit of the child into old age, which means never losing your enthusiasm.” - Aldous Huxley

“Mathematics is, in many ways, the most precious response that the human spirit has made to the call of the infinite.” - Cassius J. Keyser

“The more complex the mind, the greater the need for the simplicity of play.” - Capt. James T. Kirk, "Shore Leave," Star Trek

“It is impossible to be a mathematician without being a poet in soul.” – Sofia Kovalevskaya, *Recollections of Childhood*

“God created the integers; all else is the handiwork of man.” - Leopold Kronecker

"Man has never shown more ingenuity than in his games." – Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, in a letter to Blaise Pascal

“The scientist is not a person who gives the right answers, he is one who asks the right questions.” - Claude Levi-Strauss

“The most important application of mathematics is to keep a precocious seven year old busy for hours and hours on a rainy day.” - Curt Lindner

“Out of an infinity of designs a mathematician chooses one pattern for beauty’s sake and pulls it down to earth.” – Marston Morse

“Not one student in a thousand breaks down from overwork.” - William Allan Neilson

“The process of training by which the intellect, instead of being formed or sacrificed to some particular or accidental purpose, some specific trade or profession, or study or science, is disciplined for its own sake, for the perception of its own proper object, and for its own highest culture, is called liberal education.” - John Henry Newman.

"Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two equals four. When that is granted, all else follows." - George Orwell, *1984*

“If you can't take a little bloody nose, maybe you ought to go back home and crawl under your bed. It's not safe out here. It's wondrous, with treasures to satiate desires, both subtle and gross. But it's not for the timid.” - Q, "Q Who", Star Trek: The Next Generation

“Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves.” - Rainer Maria Rilke

“Mathematics requires a small dose, not of genius, but an imaginative freedom which, in a larger dose, would be insanity.” – Angus K. Rodgers

“A mathematician’s work is mostly a tangle of guesswork, analogy, wishful thinking and frustration, and proof, far from being the core of discovery, is more often than not a way of making sure that our minds are not playing tricks.” – Gian-Carlo Rota

“If you are curious, you’ll find the puzzles around you. If you are determined, you will solve them.” – Erno Rubik

“The fundamental cause of the trouble is that in the modern world the stupid are cocksure while the intelligent are full of doubt.” – Bertrand Russell

“Remember kids: the only difference between screwing around and science is writing it down.” - Adam Savage, Mythbusters

“Mathematics is one of the essential emanations of the human spirit, a thing to be valued in and for itself, like art or poetry.” - Oswald Veblen

“Cherish those who seek the truth but beware of those who find it.” - Voltaire

“We don't ever understand Mathematics, we just get used to it.” - John von Neumann

“God exists since mathematics is consistent, and the devil exists since we cannot prove the consistency.”
Hermann Weyl