

1. By following the directions below, find an issue of a respected mathematics research journal on the Web. Read the table of contents. Pick two articles at random. Look at each of them for about 5 minutes, reading the introductions and looking at the *structure* of the articles. There is no chance you will understand the *content* of the articles. Monitor your own reactions, both emotional and intellectual, as you browse. Write an entertaining essay on what you saw in the articles and your reaction to it. Please type your essay (if you want to include any mathematical symbols, feel free to write the symbols by hand rather than typing).

At a minimum, write about the following. *Do not attempt to write about the content, which you will not understand.*

- Give the title and author(s) of the articles and the journal, volume, and pages where they are located.
- What was the exact *structure* of the articles?
- What made up the bulk of each article? (Directions for solving certain types of problems? Long calculations? Theorems? Or what?)
- Did anything look familiar? Did anything surprise you?
- Did it look intriguing? Repulsive? What were your intellectual and emotional reactions?
- Is mathematics a flourishing science, with new discoveries just like in physics, chemistry or medicine?
- Are there any questions you would like to ask?
- Beyond the above, write about anything else that comes to mind. Be specific and creative.

(I beg you not to say you did not understand the article. I already know that. I beg you not to say you did understand the article. You did not.)

Directions for accessing a journal article:

- Volumes of *The American Journal of Mathematics*, or *Journal* or *Proceedings* or *Transactions of the American Mathematical Society* may be accessed via the WOU Library homepage. Select the Journal Articles and Databases link. Ignore the popup menu. On the page which appears, select JSTOR from under Quick Picks, then select Browse. Choose Mathematics as the subject area and look for these two journals on the list. Select a volume (and an issue if necessary), click on the title of an article to view it.

Ecological note: It is a waste of paper to print out the article! Please don't do it.

(over \leftrightarrow)

2. Please put this item at the end of your essay.
 - (a) After about one minute of thought, write down an estimate of how many research journals there are in the world that publish mathematical research.
 - (b) Now go to <http://www.ams.org/msnhtml/serials.pdf> where you will find a partial list of such journals. Make an estimate (not an exact count unless you've got a lot of time to kill) of how many journals are on that list. Briefly tell you you got the estimate. How does it compare with the estimate in the previous part?
3. Assessment of the Essay: Assessment will be based on whether each of the specified items are included, the insights you gained, and the overall quality and maturity of the writing.

The Specified Minimum Requirements

Title, Author, Complete Reference	
Exact structure	
What made up the bulk of each article	
Familiar? Surprising? Reactions.	
Math flourishing?	
Questions?	
Creative additions	
Number of math journals	
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