

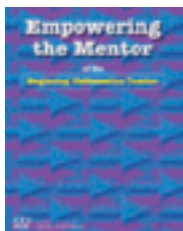
BOOKS

FROM NCTM

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Empowering the Mentor of the Beginning Mathematics Teacher

Gwen Zimmermann, Patricia Guinee, Linda M. Fulmore, and Elizabeth Murray, eds., 2009. 69 pp., \$22.95 paper. Stock no. 13477. ISBN 978-0-87353-620-2. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, www.nctm.org.



Too often, enthusiastic new mathematics teachers find themselves overwhelmed and isolated, which causes the most disillusioned of them to leave the profession

entirely. A good mentor can make all the difference. Balancing a variety of roles that include sounding board, cheerleader, colleague, collaborator, procurer of supplies, and interpreter of acronyms, a mentor eases stress and offers guidance while leading a colleague through unfamiliar territory. Ideally, this relationship benefits all involved. New teachers feel supported; mentors can, by association, learn about the latest instructional methods

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and technology; students benefit; and schools retain promising new teachers.

But how does such a synergistic relationship develop? How does a mentor determine how to help, when to help, and how much to help? That is the focus of this NCTM publication. A compilation of brief articles by mathematics teachers at all levels, *Empowering the Mentor* offers anecdotes, suggestions, warnings, checklists, questions to consider, and research results for optimizing the mentor-mentee relationship.

Far from presenting a step-by-step, how-to recipe, *Empowering the Mentor* acknowledges the complexity inherent in the mentoring relationship. Although the book loosely groups its articles by topic, each article could stand-alone. In other words, the chapters do not need to be read in order.

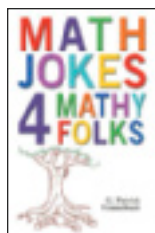
Despite a delayed sense of deprivation for the mentor I never had, the book inspired me to become a better mentor to new teachers in the future.

—Debbie Char,
St. Louis Community College,
St. Louis, MO 63110

FROM OTHER PUBLISHERS

Math Jokes 4 Mathy Folks

G. Patrick Vennebush, 2010.
112 pp., \$11.95 paper. ISBN
978-1-934759-48-6. Robert D. Reed
Publishers; www.rdrpublishers.com.



This compilation of jokes provides vivid, witty portrayals of common perceptions of mathematicians and mathematics.

It also highlights various perspectives and truths. For instance, it is great to have appreciation

for ideas such as “In God we trust. All others must supply data.” In addition, I never knew that two MDs represent a paradox. Jokes of this nature are found throughout the book and can be recited as is or easily modified.

Some jokes are more suitable for individuals with some background knowledge. It is improbable that elementary students will appreciate that “graphing rational functions is a pain in the asymptote.” The context and content of each joke should always be judged for appropriateness.

Overall, this text can easily function as a great resource that will enliven any classroom discussion or presentation.

—Vanessa R. Pitts Bannister,
University of South Florida Polytechnic,
Lakeland, FL 33803

Measurement of Rectangular Solids

2009. Gr. 5–7, 64 pp. including CD, \$9.95 paper. ISBN 978-1-60519-012-9. AIMS Education Foundation; www.aimsedu.org.



This book and CD package provides a complete unit for middle-grades students studying the volume and surface area of rectangular solids.

The use of graphic-novel-style readings called “comics,” instructional video clips called “animations,” and authentic measurement experiences make this an extremely useful product for engaging middle school students in the study of rectangular solids.

Each of the five lessons introduce students to the day’s objective with a comic that explains the topic and

important terms in a brief and appealing way. The comics come in slide form or as printable PDFs. Investigations include making a net from cereal boxes that students bring from home, cutting and assembling nets from six rectangles, and sketching “boxy buildings” on isometric drawing paper. Students fill the boxes they create with linking cubes to calculate volume; their use of isometric paper to draw reinforces the vocabulary of vertices, edges, and faces.

Students sketch and record their investigations on student worksheets, also included in PDF format on the CD. Each lesson includes a “video help” clip for the teacher, which provides an overview of the lesson, demonstrations, and important ideas to emphasize. A glossary of terms and a review of the mathematics being taught (“The Story of Measurement of Rectangular Solids”) make this

material easy for new teachers to use.

The material is appropriate for fifth-grade and sixth-grade lessons, and for seventh-grade and eighth-grade students for remedial or review work. The assessments at the end of the unit would make good pieces for fifth-grade and sixth-grade math portfolios.

—Kathy Rubendall,
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New York, NY 10034

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