

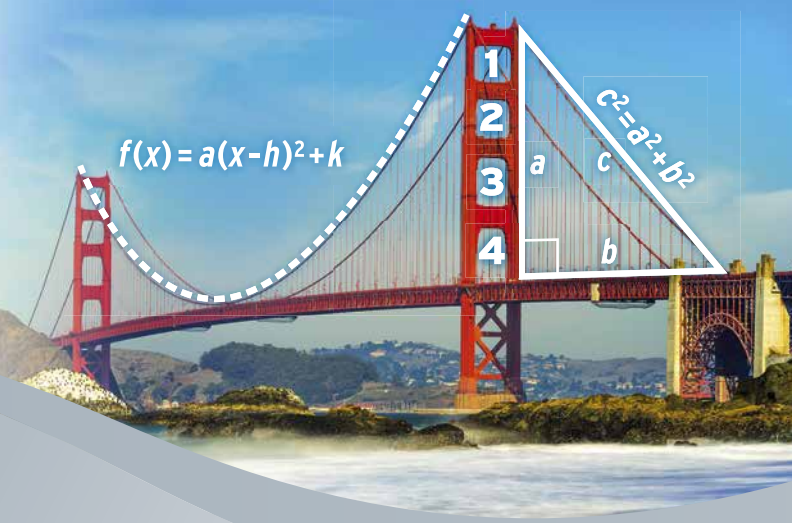


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Creating Classroom Communities

In the call for manuscripts for the 2015 Focus Issue: Creating Classroom Communities, the Editorial Panel requested manuscripts that would support *Mathematics Teacher* readers in exploring the notion of classroom as community in mathematics. The call highlighted two themes.

First, the call sought to present concrete examples of how focusing mathematics teaching in terms of communities of learners can support the mathematics education of students from underserved communities across the United States. We asked for manuscripts that addressed how to learn about our students—their interests, issues that might be important to them, their languages, and their racial or ethnic communities—so as to foster a sense of belonging in mathematics classrooms. Two articles in the issue address this theme. In “Communities for and with

Black Male Students,” Christopher C. Jett, David W. Stinson, and Brian A. Williams share and elaborate on four strategies to engage black male students. Rochelle Gutiérrez’s “HOLA: Hunt for Opportunities–Learn–Act” guides teachers toward becoming better listeners, especially to Latin@ students, and includes a host of techniques that will support learning about and connecting with your students. These two articles are complementary and function as an important resource for equity in mathematics education. The rationale, strategies, and techniques presented capitalize on the assets that cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity can bring to our classrooms and schools.

The second aspect of classrooms as communities in the call for manuscripts speaks to the relationship between a teacher’s focus on his or her classroom as community and mathematical communication. In particular, our view is that a focus on mathematical communication supports the development of mathematical understanding. We sought manuscripts that would identify concrete strategies toward encouraging and scaffolding mathematical communication and participation. “Narrowing Participation Gaps,” by Victoria Hand, Karmen Kirtley, and Michael Matassa, offers broad strategies instructive for encouraging classroom participation from more students. Marcus Hung’s “Talking Circles Promote Equitable Discourse” goes into further detail about a particular technique for structuring mathematical discussions. “Celebrating Diversity by Sharing Multiple Solution Methods,” by Woong Lim, Hongjoong Kim, Lynn Stallings, and Ji-Won Son, shares a lesson template that demonstrates how to organize instruction so that students can share their mathematical ideas or solutions. Finally, Maika Watanabe and Laura Evans’s “Assessments That Promote Collaborative Learning” provides details about how to extend a focus on classroom community so that it is included in assessment as well.

We encourage *MT* readers to dive in to the 2015 Focus Issue. We are confident that every reader will learn from the selection of articles, and we look forward to the discussion that we hope it will generate within the wider mathematics education community.

—2015 Focus Issue Editors
Laurie H. Rubel, David B. Custer, and Gregory D. Foley

