

THINKING THE CALCULUS WAY

Some Guidelines for Reading These Stories

You will receive reading packets in class from me during the week. Once each week, we will spend the afternoon discussing some of the interesting features of the stories we've read. Part of the preparation for you includes the writing of a one page "reaction" paper to the assigned readings. Here are some questions and ideas to think about for these reaction papers as you read the stories. You might pick one or two of these ideas as a base for your paper, or choose your own topic.

We've chosen these stories because we feel that they reflect something mathematical or a mathematical way of thinking. What, if anything, in these stories strikes you as mathematical?

Often these stories involve clever twists of logic. Just as we can appreciate stories for their logical development, we can appreciate mathematical proofs for the same qualities. Try to explain the effect of these logical twists and which devices the author uses to achieve them. Are there other situations, stories, or even mathematical ideas with similar effect that parallel the actions in the story?

Consider mimicking the style of one of the stories incorporating similar logical ideas or beginning with one of the logical ideas from one of the lectures/discussions on mathematics in class or from the textbooks.

What strikes you about these stories? What lines of text felt particularly effective and why? What was your initial reaction to them and how was it achieved? If you feel the intended effect was not fully gained by the story, what failed and how might it have been improved?

These are just the beginning. You can really do anything with these response papers. Just try, above all, to say something meaningful and coherent so that someone reading your paper will gain a better understanding of some small piece of the readings we discuss. Support your ideas, just like your math, with sound reasoning and examples.