

Due: Thursday, September 10, 2015

Mathography

Whether we like it or not, good or bad, we all have a history with mathematics. In your quest to learn mathematics, I am asking you to reflect on your history with mathematics and experiences in math classes by writing a mathography. A mathography is similar to an autobiography but it also focuses on your personal history with mathematics. This is a chance for you to reflect on your personal history with math and also an opportunity to share your mathematical experiences with me. Don't limit yourself to your experiences in math class. Be honest; your writing will only be read by me unless you would like to share. Try to make it interesting! I will be reading a lot of these.

Please write your mathography in a letter format addressed to me. Your letter should address **every** question below. Please write in complete sentences and use correct grammar. Also please put your period number on the top of the letter. I want to be impressed by your intelligence, so don't be lazy. Feel free to hand write or type your letter. You may submit it to me in person or electronically. My email is jmusa@pps.net.

About you:

- Elaborate on any information you included in your Who I Am sheet that is particularly important to you (your family, favorites, hobbies, accomplishments, etc.)
- What are your dreams and goals?
- Is there anything I need to know about you that would help you learn better?
- Tell me anything about yourself that you feel I should know.

About you as a math student:

- How do you feel about math? Do you like or dislike it? Why do you feel that way?
- Are you "good" at mathematics? Explain.
- Do you like or dislike some areas of mathematics better than others? If so, which ones do you like or dislike? Why do you like or dislike them?
- What makes math great and/or horrible to you?
- What experiences in math have you liked? Why?
- Describe your most memorable experience in learning math (good or bad).
- How do you feel about taking the math class you are taking this year? What do you expect to learn?
- What type of things do you think are important to help students learn math?

On the back of this sheet is my own mathography. Please read it as an example of what your letter should look like.

Dear Geometry Students,

Being able to teach at Benson H.S. is such a privilege to me. I did my student teaching last year with Ms. Pfohman here at Benson. I loved it so much that I got hired 😊. So, this year is my first official year teaching. My students last year, in Ms. Pfohman's class, taught me so much. My husband is the one who encouraged me to be a math teacher. He thought I would be good at it because he said that I had way too much fun being a math tutor at Portland Community College.

Outside of teaching, I stay busy with my family. My culture is family-centric and kitchen-centric (because we love food). I grew up in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. My siblings and parents still live there. So, I go home at least twice a year. My siblings are my best friends. When we get together, we enjoy laughing and going out. I also have family all over the U.S. and around the world. One of my favorite things to do is travel. Seeing the world is priceless to me. My dream is to move to a beach that is sunny and warm year round.

When I was in high school, I was good at math, I believe, because I had good teachers. One of my math teachers encouraged me to study math in college. I asked her, "What would I do with a degree in math?" She replied, "Teach!" I said, "No thanks." Rather, I got a degree in Microbiology. When I moved to Oregon, I took math classes at Portland Community College and Portland State University. Those upper level math classes and graduate level math classes bulldozed me. I realized that I needed help for those math classes. So, I got extra help from my professors during their office hours, and I even hired tutors to help me a few times. I also found resources online to help me. The combination of working hard and getting help is why I believe I succeeded.

I really enjoy math, especially Algebra and Calculus. Statistics is a branch of mathematics that is a bit of a thorn in my side. I want to be excellent at Statistics, because Statistics directly impacts our day-to-day lives. I actually think that Statistics is more important than Calculus. However, I am only "ok" at it. I think I just need to invest more time. Since I began studying math, I can see math in almost every aspect of our world. I find math to be so fascinating. Students think that math is hard. I agree that math can be challenging. However, once the logic of mathematics is understood, it gets easier. Math is like learning a foreign language. Once you are fluent in it, you can do it well.

Joanne Musa