

EDITORIAL

You will notice if you are reading this, that *Reflections* have been replaced by an editorial. This is one of a small number of changes that we have made to this, the first issue put together by the new editorial team.

Some of you will mourn the passing of *Correlation Street*, but as editors we are aware that Jonny Griffiths has considerable talents, including his gift for producing 'Rich Starting Points' (RISPS). Fortunately Jonny has agreed to take a change of direction and produce some exemplars of these intriguing tasks to share with readers. He provides both a task and some text written with all his usual style to describe how RISPS are an important element in his teaching.

Following this theme, Pete Griffin agreed to write an article in which he outlines what makes a task 'rich' – this followed an INSET presentation attended by two of the editors where Pete impressed with his expertise and clarity of thought. We hope you enjoy his analysis but we realise there are likely to be many differing viewpoints 'out there', and would welcome contributions that put forward alternative perspectives.

In a similar vein, the article by Alan Graham and Suki Honey also explores the notion of rich tasks but not so explicitly. Working with adult students, they offered tasks that enabled the adults to work with specificity as they 'developed a feel' for the problem.

A new feature, which we hope will become a favourite of many readers, is 'Provocation'. This is written by two long-time members of the association, and is a dialogue relating to current issues in mathematics education. Again we hope this may provoke a variety of responses either in written format or maybe on the *Discussion Forum* of the ATM website www.atm.org.uk/forum/. As this is written we are facing some uncertainty with the announcement that SATs at the end of KS3 are to be abandoned. Does this mean that we can focus on teaching mathematics instead of teaching to tests? Does it mean the government will find alternatives to fill our time, with meaningless paperwork that distracts us from the vital business of planning learning opportunities for our students? We expect that when this is being read the situation will have been clarified, but it is hoped that the focus on learning for all students will be reinstated.

The International Congress of Mathematics Education (ICME) was held in Mexico July 2008. ATM sent a small group of representatives, to run an ATM style workshop on our behalf. The results were perhaps a little disappointing for those who attended because the workshop did not become the

focal point we would have liked, but within Geoff Faux's commentary is an interesting task that can be found with the photographs on the centre page.

As usual we want the journal to represent all phases of mathematics education and we include some primary offerings. Kimie Markarian presents insights to 'Finger Counting' that gives us a method to use with children who prefer an active approach to their learning. The 'puzzles page' is one that could be used in any phase, but primary colleagues are likely to get out the equipment and be really creative in the way the problems might be introduced in their classroom. If as a primary teacher, you use any of these ideas in your classroom please write and share your insights in to their use and possibly some pupil reactions.

Amongst all the items above, there are others that offer a new look at pieces of mathematics (Polygons and their circles), or a problem-solving style of working (Changing the diameter of a viewing tube), or an analysis of the classroom itself (Fixed or growth – does it matter?).

Hasan Unal's colourful diagrams give us a different perspective on old problems, and the analysis for 'Decagonal Numbers' is masterful. Look at it carefully! There is a point at which a significant creative leap has been made. What made him do that? Can you find it? He asks you to consider other possibilities. Get the *Multilink* out and see if you can make a creative leap of your own.

The article by Jay Timotheus gives us both practical situations and identifies three stages that can be applied to mathematical activity both with and without ICT. This article will be followed up in a later issue.

We bid farewell to HOD Lines. We would like to thank the contributor who kept our interest, but who felt it was time for a change. The replacement in this issue is the article 'From the front: here we go again'. The intention is that we will have different contributors providing something that is both brief and contemporary relating to their classroom.

Finally, the next article is a retrospective by Colin Foster, one of the retiring editorial team. He takes the opportunity to describe how being an editor of *MT* has affected him personally, and the whole school in which he works, in terms of the mathematics they included in the learning. Clearly it has been a labour of love for Colin, and he has genuinely benefited from his time with the editorial team. We hope we are able to say the same after our three-year tenure.

Margaret Jones

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