

Homework in Math 10 Spring 2004

Style of homework. Homework in this class will be in *paragraph style*; that is, you'll be asked not just to solve a problem or do a calculation, but also to explain what you're doing. You won't have to write a huge amount for each question, but you will have to write explanations in complete sentences. For more details, see below.

By the way, since this will take some effort, you'll only be assigned 2 or 3 questions (usually 3) on each homework.

Doing homework together. With a few exceptions, in this class, you have the option of doing any homework in a team of 2 or 3, and submitting a single writeup for the team each time. If you want to do homework in a team, the following rules apply.

- Teams can have either 2 or 3 people.
- One writeup is turned in for the whole team, and is to be written up by **one person only**. This person should be clearly indicated at the beginning of the homework (e.g.: "Writeup: Jane Nguyen"), and the names of the rest of the team should also be written at the beginning of the homework.
- Everyone in the team gets the same grade for the homework.
- The person doing the writeup must rotate each time. Teams that do not change writers on a regular basis will be disbanded.
- Anyone who does not contribute to the homework should not have their name listed at the beginning of the homework, and will receive a 0 for the homework. If there are extenuating circumstances, they must be cleared with me.

If you want to be placed randomly in a team, just let me know (e-mail: hsu@math.sjsu.edu), and I'll try to match you up appropriately.

How to write homework in paragraph style in Math 10. As you'll see soon, the homework in this class is almost certainly quite different from the homework you've done in other classes. Many of the homework questions are like puzzles of some sort, which means that your answers will naturally be written out in complete sentences. The idea that you should keep in mind is that every answer to a homework question should be an *explanation*, aimed at someone much like yourself (i.e., a fellow Math 10 student).

For example, consider the following classic puzzle, which resembles the first few homework questions you'll see.

Vincent was looking at a portrait, and someone else asked him, "Who's the person in the picture?" Vincent replied, "Brothers and sisters have I none, but this man's father is my father's son." Who is in the picture?

After some thought, if you manage to figure out the answer, one good explanation might go like this.

Since Vincent has no brothers or sisters, when he says, "my father's son," he must mean himself. In other words, what he's really saying is, "This man's father is me." That means that the man in the picture must be Vincent's son.

There are many other possible good explanations.

As you can see, homework in paragraph style doesn't have to be lengthy or complicated. The point is, once you figure out an answer to a question, you just explain the thought process that led you to the answer, in a natural way. Don't worry too much about making it sound elegant or slick; just write down what you're thinking.