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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1980 Volume VII: Problem Solving

A Chronological History of Pi with Developmental Activities in Problem Solving

Guide for Curriculum Unit 80.07.11

by Anthony P. Solli

The unit begins with a historical development of pi and proceeds with examples of activities to help students develop a deeper appreciation of the mathematical beauty and value of pi. Students should have at least a working knowledge of fractions and decimals, plus an intuitive understanding of the nomenclature, terminology, vocabulary, and formulae of basic geometry. The historical part of this unit may be used in any grade level, preferably middle school. The activities part could be used in any middle school level, although it is recommended for average and above average students working in small groups or independently. It also may be used as a motivational or summary part of a geometry unit or pre-algebra course. The length of time needed could be a week or two, depending on the amount of time you would spend on the history of pi and doing all or some of the suggested activities.

(Recommended for Middle and High School Math, Pre-Algebra and Algebra I and II.)

Key Words

History Pi Mathematics Problem Solving

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