

Read a Book Day (Sept. 6) Meeting

Also ideal for Read Across America Day (March 2)
or Children's Book Week (May & November)

Meeting Plan

This meeting idea is great to use at a variety of times throughout the year. We have identified three particular holidays that are relevant: Read a Book Day (Sept. 6), Read Across America Day (March 2) and Children's Book Week (May & November).

The problems that follow come from a problem set that originally was printed in the *2005–2006 MATHCOUNTS School Handbook*. If you use this for your first meeting, we suggest letting the students work in groups on this set of problems. The difficulty level from problem to problem varies.

When students are finished with the 10 problems we have provided, encourage them to write some of their own that are based on books and characters they are familiar with. Students then can swap papers with each other, or you can consolidate the problems and make another handout for the next meeting. Also, ask students to keep an eye out for opportunities to create similar problems based on the books they read throughout the year. Perhaps speak with the English teachers in your school to see if they have suggestions for problem scenarios based on the books students will be reading in class.

1. Tweedledum says, "The sum of your weight and twice mine is 361 pounds." Tweedledee says, "Contrariwise, the sum of your weight and twice mine is 362 pounds." If they are both correct, how many pounds do Tweedledum and Tweedledee weigh together? [*Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll]

2. Caractacus Pott invents a candy for which he is paid one shilling for every thousand candies sold. He expects to sell 5 million candies every year, and one shilling is equivalent to 14 U.S. cents. How much will Caractacus make in one year in U.S. dollars? [*Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* by Ian Fleming]

3. Sherlock Holmes states, "If a rod of six feet threw a shadow of nine feet, a tree of 64 feet would throw one of ..." What length, in feet, should Sherlock say next? [*Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels & Stories, Volume I* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle]

4. Four children find a magic token that grants half of any wish. Their mother takes the token with her to a destination 20 miles away, and when she wishes she was home, she magically ends up halfway home. If the mother continues to make the same wish, how many more wishes will it take for her to be within 100 feet of her house? There are 5280 feet in 1 mile. [*Half Magic* by Edward Eager]

5. Charlie Bucket receives one bar of chocolate on his birthday. He eats one nibble of the same size each day and manages to make the bar last for 30 days. What percent of his chocolate bar is left after 18 days? [*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl]

6. Milo sees this sign that describes the distance to Digitopolis in six different ways. According to this sign, how many inches are in a rod? [*The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster]

DIGITOPOLIS
5 miles
1600 rods
8800 yards
26,400 feet
316,800 inches
633,600 half-inches

7. Five men were to share a treasure of gold with Long John Silver. If the treasure were split in the following ratio 2:5:7:10:20:50, and the least amount any of the six pirates received was 14,000 pounds of gold, what is the total weight of the gold treasure? [*Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson]

8. The Emperor of Lilliput gives Gulliver a daily allowance of food and drink that is equivalent to the amount given to 1728 Lilliputians. If Gulliver's allowance of food and drink will fit in a cubical box that measures 24 "blots" along each edge, what is the edge length, in blots, of the cubical box for one Lilliputian's daily allowance of food and drink? [*Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift]

9. A ship travels the 200-mile route from Fort Kearney to Omaha at an average rate of 40 miles per hour. The ship reaches Omaha at 1 p.m. What time did it leave Fort Kearney? (Assume the ship did not cross any time zones.) [*Around the World in Eighty Days* by Jules Verne]

10. Alice changes size several times. The ratio of her original height to her second height is 24 to 5. The ratio of her second height to her third height is 1 to 12. The ratio of her original height to her fourth height is 16 to 1. The tallest of these four heights is 10 feet. What is her shortest height, in inches? [*Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll]

Answers: 241 pounds; \$700; 96 feet; 10 wishes; 40%; 198 inches; 658,000 pounds; 2 blots; 8 a.m.; 3 inches

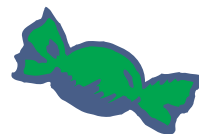


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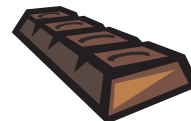


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