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# MATH WRITING

## WHAT THIS EPISODE IS ABOUT

In this episode, students will learn how to write a creative story with a math theme. By the end of the lesson, students will be able to

- ✎ apply the writing process to writing a story with a math theme
- ✎ incorporate math concepts into a creative-writing assignment

## VIDEO SUMMARY

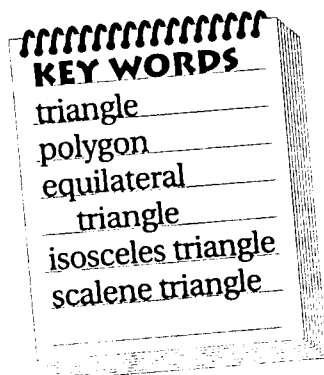
Through her journal entries, Sarah tells a story about her “math anxiety.” She is worried that she takes too long to complete her math assignments and has trouble relating math concepts to the real world.

One day, Mr. Parsons, a math teacher, reads the class a picture book called “The Greedy Triangle.” Sarah likes the story and begins to see a connection between literature and math.

Mr. Parsons surprises the students by giving them a writing assignment. The students are to work in groups to take photos of triangles around town and to produce a creative story about the shapes.

Sarah teams with Robin and Kyle, and together they take photos of triangular shapes in the architecture of downtown buildings. As they discuss the photos and the assignment, Kyle suggests that they write a detective story about triangles.

The three students brainstorm ideas, write a rough draft, and then hash out the revisions. They create a story entitled “The Case of the Twisted Triangles,” featuring the characters Ray Dius, Sir Cumference, and Di Agonal. Then they produce a slide show based on the story.



## BEFORE VIEWING THE VIDEO

Ask students to think of any interesting stories they've read or movies they've seen that have themes related to math or science. Stories by such authors as Ray Bradbury and Arthur C. Clarke often feature math in the plots. (Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* is a book and movie about a powerful geometric shape from another world.)

Ask students how they would go about writing a story about math. Which math concepts (formulas, addition and subtraction, fractions, decimals, etc.) would they write a story about?

Tell students they are going to watch a video in which a young girl who has trouble with math finds a fun and creative way to tell a story about triangles.

## WHILE VIEWING THE VIDEO

1. After Sarah, Robin, and Kyle discuss their project in the restaurant, PAUSE the video. Assign students to small groups, and ask them to brainstorm ideas for a creative story involving geometric shapes.

Ask students: "What kind of story could you write? Who would be the main characters? Where would the story take place? What would happen in the story?"

2. After Kyle leaves Sarah's house, PAUSE the video and ask the groups to write a rough draft of a story by using some of the ideas they have brainstormed.
3. After the revision session in the library, PAUSE the video. Ask each group to work with another group to revise their rough drafts.

## AFTER VIEWING THE VIDEO

After groups have revised their stories, ask each group to create a book to be shared with the class. Each group should illustrate its story with drawings, computer graphics, or photos.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Encourage students to keep math journals. Journal entries may include steps for solving difficult problems, explanations of problem-solving tips and techniques, and math vocabulary.

## **INTERNET RESOURCES**

**The Math Forum**  
*<http://forum.swarthmore.edu/>*

**Activities Integrating Math, Science, & Technology (AIMS)**  
*<http://www.aimsedu.org/>*

**The Geometry Center**  
*<http://www.geom.umn.edu/>*

**Creative Writing for Kids**  
*<http://kidswriting.miningco.com/>*

