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Disprove by Counterexample and Prove by Example

Disprove by Counterexample

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  - Bill thinks that $(\forall\, n \in \mathbb{N})[DIFF(n^2) \leq 6]$
- To PROVE this we would need to prove it for EVERY n
- To DISPROVE it we only need to find ONE n for which it is false.

Data for n = 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

n	n^2	$DIFF(n^2)$
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- Keep doing this until get to counterexample.
- Then conjecture will be
  - We have disproven the conjecture since for 9^2 the diff is 7.

Now What?

- The following questions remain
  1) Maybe the conjecture is true past some point. Maybe
  $$(\exists\, n_0)(\forall\, n \geq\, n_0)[\mathrm{diff}(n^2) \leq\, 6]$$
  2) Maybe 6 is to low. So maybe
  $$(\forall\, n \geq\, 4)[\mathrm{diff}(n^2) \leq\, 7]$$
  3) Maybe item 2 is incorrect but holds past some point, so
  $$(\exists\, n_0)(\forall\, n \geq\, n_0)[\,\mathrm{diff}(n^2) \leq\, 7]$$

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- Same Idea but stated differently:
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- In either case we need to show that some x with some property exists.

Constructive proofs in Number Theory
(and one non-constructive one)

Our first constructive proof

- **Claim** There exists a natural number that you ***cannot*** write as a sum of three squares of natural numbers.
  - Examples of numbers you ***can*** write as a sum of three squares
    - $0 = 0^2 + 0^2 + 0^2$
    - $1 = 1^2 + 0^2 + 0^2$
    - $2 = 1^2 + 1^2 + 0^2$
- Try to find a number that ***cannot*** be written as such.

Proof

- The natural number 7 cannot be written as the sum of three squares.
- This we can prove by case analysis
  1. Can't use 3, since $3^2 = 9 > 7$
  2. Can't use 2 more than once, since $2^2 + 2^2 = 8 > 7$
  3. So, we can use 2, one or zero times.
     a) If we use 2 once, we have $7 = 2^2 + a^2 + b^2 \leq 2^2 + 1^2 + 1^2 = 6 < 7$
     b) If we use 2 zero times, the maximum value is $1^2 + 1^2 + 1^2 = 3 < 7$
  4. Done!

Your turn, class!

- Let's break into breakout rooms and prove the following theorems

1. There exists an integer n that can be written in ***two ways*** as a sum of two prime numbers.
2. There is a **perfect square** that can be written as a sum of two other **perfect squares**.
3. Suppose $r, s \in \mathbb{Z}$. Then, $(\exists k \in \mathbb{Z})[\, 22r + 18s = 2k]$

Our first non-constructive proof

- Theorem There exists a pair of irrational numbers a and b such that a^b is a rational number.

Our first non-constructive proof

- For the following proof, we will assume *known* that $\sqrt{2} \notin \mathbb{Q}$.
- This is a *fact*, which we will prove later on in this section.
- Now, on to the proof!

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  1. If $\sqrt{2}^{\sqrt{2}}$ is rational, then we have proven the result. Done.
  2. If $\sqrt{2}^{\sqrt{2}}$ is irrational, then we will name it c. Then, observe that $c^{\sqrt{2}}$ is rational, since $c^{\sqrt{2}} = \left(\left(\sqrt{2}\right)^{\sqrt{2}}\right)^{\sqrt{2}} = \left(\sqrt{2}\right)^2 = 2 \in \mathbb{Q}$. Since both c and $\sqrt{2}$ are irrationals, but $c^{\sqrt{2}}$ is rational, we are done.

Analysis of proof

- Suppose $x = \sqrt{2}$, an irrational. From the previous theorem, we know
  a) Either that $a = x, b = x$ are two irrationals that satisfy the condition , OR
  b) That $a = x^x, b = x$ are the two irrationals.

- But we **don't care which pair it is**! As long as one exists!

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