

# Mathematical Biography

Calculus 11, Veritas Prep.

Even on the first day of school, you come to math class with a lot of baggage: not just pencils and paper, but your previous experiences with math and math classes. This assignment is your opportunity to think about those experiences and tell me something about them so I can get to know you, and teach you, better. Take some time to reflect on the following questions, and write out careful answers on a page or two to be handed in. You need not write a complete essay, though that'd be nice, but please do write in complete sentences and make the effort to express complete thoughts. The better I can understand your writing, the better I will be able to teach you. (Please type it.)

- Overall, how do you feel about math? Have you always felt that way, or were there specific experiences or moments that have given you that feeling? If the latter, what were they, and why were they important?
- What was your best experience with math—this could be a particular class, or problem you solved, or book you read, or even a situation outside of class where math really helped you. What made it so good? What were you doing? Try to be specific: “My teacher was always friendly when I asked for extra help” is more useful than “My teacher was really cool.”
- What has been your worst experience in math? This could be a particular topic you couldn't understand, a problem you couldn't solve, or situation where lack of expertise was embarrassing. What made it so bad? Was it unavoidable, or was there something you could have done differently to make it less awful? What could you do now if the situation came up again? Do you still feel bad about it now, or is it something you can laugh about?
- Is there one particular math problem or topic that you really like? If so, what was it, and why do you like it so much?
- Is there anything you'd like to change about your own approach to mathematics this year? If so, what?
- In summary, what are one or two adjectives you would use to describe your feelings about mathematics, what would they be?
- What is something you wouldn't expect me to know about you? This could be something like your favorite flavor of ice cream, the fact that you're a nationally ranked shuffleboard player, or that you've never really liked wearing shorts—but it should be something that I wouldn't know from seeing your name on a class list.

Your biography will be graded on effort; as long as it is complete and thoughtful, you will receive full credit. (Your biography will be kept confidential.) **Due:**

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