Applying mathematics and solving problems

As outcomes, Year 8 pupils should, for example:

Use logical argument to establish the truth of a statement; give solutions to an appropriate degree of accuracy in the context of the problem.

For example, solve:

Consecutive sums

Prove that the sum of any five consecutive numbers is always divisible by 5.

Related objectives:

Represent problems in algebraic, geometric or graphical form.

Link to multiples, factors and primes, and tests of divisibility (pages 52–5).

Max box

Open-top boxes can be made from paper by cutting identical squares from each corner and folding up the sides.



Start with a 20 cm square.
Plan to make an open-top box with the greatest possible capacity.
What are its dimensions?

Explore for other sizes of squares.

Related objectives:

Suggest extensions to problems, conjecture and generalise; identify exceptional cases or counter-examples.

Link to ordering decimals (pages 40–1); constructing linear functions arising from real-life problems and plotting their graphs (pages 172–3); interpreting graphs arising from real situations (pages 174–7).

Pizzo

These are the ingredients for a pizza for 4 people.

½ oz dried yeast2 oz mushrooms½ pint water2 tomatoes1 lb of plain flour4 oz cheese½ teaspoon of salt6 black olives8 oz ham

Adapt the recipe for 6 people. Convert the recipe to metric measurements.

Related objectives:

Solve problems in a range of contexts.

Link to solving simple word problems involving ratio and direct proportion (pages 78–81); converting imperial to metric measures (pages 228–9).

As outcomes, Year 9 pupils should, for example:

Present a concise, reasoned argument, using symbols, diagrams, graphs and text; give solutions to an appropriate degree of accuracy; recognise limitations on accuracy of data and measurements; give reasons for choice of presentation, explaining features, showing insight into the problem's structure. For example, solve:

Perimeter

The perimeter of a triangle is $48 \, \text{cm}$. The length of the shortest side is s cm, and of another side is $2s \, \text{cm}$. Prove that 12 > s > 8.

Related objectives:

Represent problems in algebraic, geometric or graphical form.

Link to solving problems using properties of triangles (pages 184-9).

Round table

At Winchester there is a large table known as the Round Table of King Arthur.



The diameter of the table is 5.5 metres. A book claims that 50 people can sit around the table. Do you think this is possible? Explain and justify your answer. State all the assumptions that you make.

Related objectives:

Solve substantial problems by breaking them into simpler tasks, using efficient techniques, methods and resources, including ICT; use trial and improvement where a more efficient method is not obvious.

Link to using circle formulae (pages 234-7).

Seeing the wood for the trees
 Estimate the number of trees that are needed each day to provide newspapers for the UK.

Related objectives:

Solve increasingly demanding problems; explore connections in mathematics across a range of contexts.

Link to discussing how data relate to the problem, identifying possible sources; identifying possible bias and planning to minimise it (pages 250–1); communicating results using selected tables, graphs and diagrams in support, using ICT as appropriate (pages 272–5); examining results critically, recognising the limitations of any assumptions and their effect on conclusions drawn (pages 272–5).

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