

Thirty-fourth Annual Columbus State Invitational Mathematics Tournament

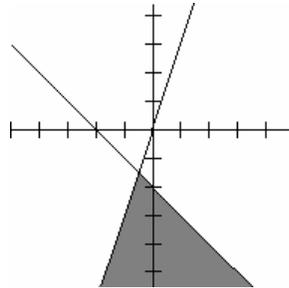
Sponsored by  
Columbus State University  
Department of Mathematics  
February 23, 2008

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**Solutions to the 2008 Mathematics Tournament Problems**

1) The answer is B).  $\frac{(2y)^{2008}}{2x} \div (x-y)^{2007} = \frac{(-2x)^{2008}}{2x} \div (2x)^{2007} = \frac{(-2x)^{2008}}{(2x)^{2008}} = 1$

2) The answer is D). Draw the lines  $y = 3x$  and  $y = -2 - 2x$ . The solution set for both  $y < 3x$  and  $y < -2 - 2x$  is below both lines.



3) The answer is D).

$5^{2008} = 25^{1004} = 25^{1003}(25) = (4 \cdot 6 + 1)^{1003}(25) = (4k + 1)(25) = 100k + 25$  for some positive integer  $k$ , where we used

$$(4 \cdot 6 + 1)^{1003} = (4 \cdot 6)^{1003} + 1003(4 \cdot 6)^{1002} + \dots + 1 = 4k + 1.$$

4) The answer is C). Let  $x$  be the number correct answers and  $y$  be the number of incorrect answers. Then we have the linear system

$$200 + 12x - 3y = 410$$

$$2x - y = 32$$

So  $x = 19$  and  $y = 6$ . There are 50 problems on the test. Therefore, he left 25 problems blank.

5) The answer is B). Let  $x$  be the time required to paint one third of the entire room.

Then  $\left(\frac{1}{40} + \frac{1}{60}\right)x = \frac{1}{3}$ .  $x = 8$  min.

6) The answer is E). Let  $x$  be the number of gallons of brine containing 50% of salt required to make the brine solution.  $\frac{10(90\%) + x(50\%)}{10 + x} = 70\%$ .  $x = 10$ .

7) The answer is A). Jane has \$240 and Dick has \$240 at the end. So solving the equation  $x - \frac{1}{3}x - \frac{1}{4}(x - \frac{1}{3}x) = 240$  gives  $x = \$480$ .

8) The answer is E). Let  $x$  be the number of the boys in the class and  $y$  be the number of the girls in the class. Then  $\frac{3}{4}x + \frac{4}{5}y$  is the number of the students who passed the test and  $\frac{3}{4}x = \frac{4}{5}y$ . So the fraction of the entire class passed the test is

$$\frac{\frac{3}{4}x + \frac{4}{5}y}{x + y} = \frac{2\left(\frac{4}{5}\right)y}{\frac{16}{15}y + y} = \frac{24}{31}.$$

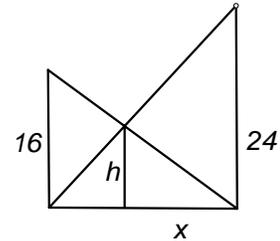
9) The answer is E). Let  $x$  be the mileage. The problem is equivalent to solving the inequality

$$(30)(5) + 0.12x < (35)(5) + 0.10x. \quad x < 1250 \text{ miles.}$$

10) The answer is E). By similarity of triangles, we have

$$\frac{h}{16} = \frac{x}{13} \text{ and } \frac{h}{24} = \frac{13-x}{13}, \text{ which gives the equation}$$

$$\frac{h}{24} = 1 - \frac{h}{16}. \text{ Therefore, } h = 9.6 \text{ ft.}$$



11) The answer is C).  ${}_{11}C_5(2x)^6(-3y)^4 = -7185024x^6y^5$

12) The answer is B). Let  $xyz$  be the three-digit number so that

$$100x + 10y + z = 19(x + y + z), \quad 100z + 10y + x - (100x + 10y + z) = 297 \text{ and } y - z = 3.$$

The equations can be reduced to 
$$\begin{cases} 9x - y - 2z = 0 \\ z - x = 3 \\ y = z + 3 \end{cases}$$
 Eliminating the variable  $y$  yields the

system 
$$\begin{cases} 3x - z = 1 \\ -x + z = 3 \end{cases}$$
, which yields  $x = 2$  and  $z = 5$ . Hence  $y = z + 3 = 8$ .

13) The answer is B). Let  $x$  be the width and  $y$  be the length. Then

$$120 + 24 = (x + 4)(y - 3) \text{ and } xy = 120.$$

The first equation is equivalent to  $148 = xy + 4y - 3x - 12$ . Replacing  $xy$  by

$120$ , we obtain  $4y - 3x - 40 = 0$ . Replacing  $x$  by  $\frac{120}{y}$  in the previous equation, we have

$y^2 - 10y - 90 = 0$  or  $(y - 15)(y + 6) = 0$ . Thus  $y = 15$  and  $y = -6$ . Since  $y$  must be

nonnegative,  $y = 15$  is the only solution. Then  $x = \frac{120}{y} = \frac{120}{15} = 8$ . The perimeter is  $2(x + y) = 46$  in.

14) The answer is C).  $2008_{10} = 11111011000_2$

15) The answer is E). Let  $u = \sqrt{x-1}$ . Then the equation becomes  $\frac{7}{u^2} - \frac{2}{u} + \frac{1}{7} = 0$ , which gives  $u = 7$ . Hence  $\sqrt{x-1} = 7$ . We have  $x = 50$ .

16) The answer is D). The ratio of the volume of the scaled model to the volume of actual prism is  $1:40^3$ . Thus,  $\frac{5 \text{ cm}^3}{V} = \frac{1}{40^3}$ .  $V = 320000 \text{ cm}^3 = 0.32 \text{ m}^3$ .

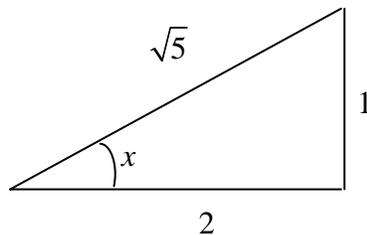
17) The answer is A). If  $r_1, r_2$ , and  $r_3$  are three solutions to the equation  $x^3 - 27 = 0$ , then  $x^3 - 27 = (x - r_1)(x - r_2)(x - r_3) = 0$ . The sum of the three solutions is the negative coefficient of  $x^2$ , which is 0.

18) The answer is E). The equation  $2^{16^x} = 16^{2^x}$  is equivalent to the equation  $2^{16^x} = 2^{4(2^x)}$  or  $4x = x + 2$ . So  $x = 2/3$ .

19) The answer is B). The equation is equivalent to  $3(2^x)^2 - 8(2^x) - 3 = 0$  or  $(3(2^x) + 1)(2^x - 3) = 0$ .

Solving the equation  $2^x = 3$  yields  $x = \log_2 3$  and the equation  $3(2^x) + 1 = 0$  has no real solutions.

20) The answer is D).  $\cos x = 2 \sin x$  gives  $\cot x = 2$ . Using a right triangle with right side lengths 1 and 2, we have  $\sin x \cos x = \frac{2}{5}$ .



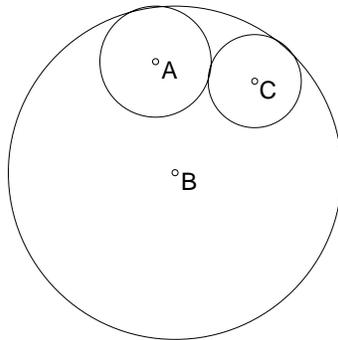
21) The answer is C).  $b_1 = 3, b_2 = -2, b_3 = -\frac{1}{3}, b_4 = \frac{1}{2}, b_5 = 3$ . So the sequence is periodic with a period 4. Thus  $b_1 = b_5 = \dots = b_{2005} = 3$  and  $b_4 = b_8 = \dots = b_{2008} = \frac{1}{2}$ .

22) The answer is E). You can expect to win 1 time and to lose 9999 times. The probability to win is  $1/10000$  and the probability to lose is  $9999/10000$ . Therefore the expected value of your gain or loss in dollars is  $5000(1/10000) - 1(9999/10000) = -0.4999 \approx -\$0.5$ .

23) The answer is A). The probability that you get 4 or 5 correct answers is  ${}_5C_4(1/5)^4(4/5) + {}_5C_5(1/5)^5 = 0.00672$ .

24) The answer is C). Note that each zero at the end of  $2008!$  comes from a factor 10 of the number  $2008!$  and that  $k \times 2 \times 5^n = k \times 5^{n-1} \times 10$  for natural numbers  $k$  and  $n$ . So a natural power of 5 and a factor 2 produce a factor 10. There are more even numbers than integer multiple of natural powers of 5 from 1 to 2008. So finding the number of zeros at the end of  $2008!$  is equivalent to finding how many integer multiple of the only factors  $5, 5^2, 5^3$  and  $5^4$  in 2008, respectively, since  $5^5 = 3125 > 2008$ .  $2008 \div 5 = 401.6$ ,  $2008 \div 25 = 80.32$ ,  $2008 \div 125 = 16.064$ , and  $2008 \div 625 = 3.2128$ . Therefore,  $401 + 80 + 16 + 3 = 500$ .

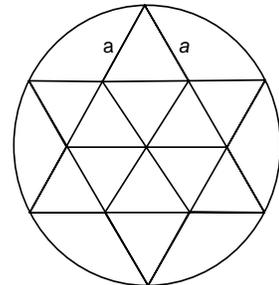
25) The answer is D). Note that  $AB = 21 - 7 = 14$ ,  $AC = 7 + 6 = 13$ ,  $BC = 21 - 6 = 15$ , and by Horen's formula, area  $\Delta ABC = \sqrt{s(s-AB)(s-AC)(s-BC)} = 84$ , where  $s = (AB + AC + BC) / 2$ .



26) The answer is A). The letters A, M and T repeat twice in MATHEMATICS, respectively. Other letters repeats only once. The number of distinct permutations using all letters is  $\frac{11!}{2!2!2!} = 4989600$ .

27) The answer is C). The area of the star is the sum of 12 equilateral triangles with the edge length  $a$ . The area of each equilateral triangles with the edge length  $a$  is  $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{4} a^2$ .

Therefore, The area of the star is  $12 \left( \frac{\sqrt{3}}{4} a^2 \right) = 3\sqrt{3}a^2$ .



28) The answer is B).

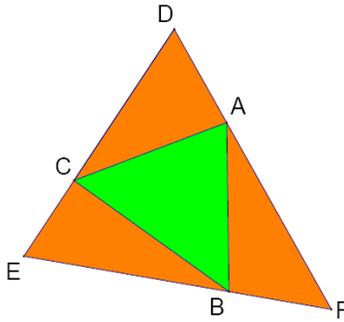
$$\left[ \log_a \left( \frac{\log_a a^3}{3a} \right) \right]^{100} = \left[ \log_a \left( \frac{3}{3a} \right) \right]^{100} = \left[ \log_a a^{-1} \right]^{100} = (-1)^{100} = 1$$

29) The answer is A). Let  $\theta = \sin^{-1} x$ . Then  $\sin \theta = x$  and  $-\frac{\pi}{2} \leq \theta \leq \frac{\pi}{2}$ . Since

$$\cos \theta \geq 0 \text{ for } -\frac{\pi}{2} \leq \theta \leq \frac{\pi}{2}, \cos \theta = \sqrt{1 - \sin^2 \theta} = \sqrt{1 - x^2}. \text{ Thus } \cot \theta = \frac{\cos \theta}{\sin \theta} = \frac{\sqrt{1 - x^2}}{x}.$$

30) The answer is E).  $Y = 104^4 + 4 \times 104^3 + 6 \times 104^2 + 4 \times 104 + 1 = (104 + 1)^4 = 105^4$ . The prime factorization of 105 is  $3 \cdot 5 \cdot 7$ . So  $Y = 3^4 5^4 7^4$ . All positive factors of  $Y$  have the form of  $3^n 4^m 7^t$  for  $n, m, t$  in  $\{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$ . Therefore, the number of positive factors is  $5^3 = 125$ .

31) The answer is D).



$$\text{Area } \triangle DEF = \frac{1}{2} (DE)(EF) \sin \angle DEB = \frac{1}{2} (DF)(FE) \sin \angle DFE = \frac{1}{2} (DE)(DF) \sin \angle EDF$$

$$\text{Area } \triangle CEB = \frac{1}{2} (CE)(EB) \sin \angle DEB,$$

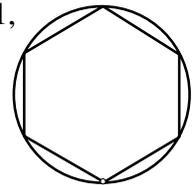
$$\text{Area } \triangle BFA = \frac{1}{2} (BF)(FA) \sin \angle DFE,$$

$$\text{Area } \triangle CDA = \frac{1}{2} (DA)(DC) \sin \angle EDF.$$

Using  $DC = 2EC$ ,  $EB = 2BF$ ,  $FA = 2AD$ , and

$\text{Area } \triangle ABC = \text{Area } \triangle DEF - (\text{Area } \triangle CEB + \text{Area } \triangle BFA + \text{Area } \triangle CDA)$ , we have  $(\text{Area } \triangle DEF) / (\text{Area } \triangle ABC) = 3$ .

32) The answer is B). Consider an inscribed hexagon with side length of 1, which partitions the unit circle into 6 equal arcs. Fix a vertex. The point on the circle having the distance from the vertex greater than or equal to 1 must locate on the four non adjacent arcs. The probability is  $\frac{4}{6} = \frac{2}{3}$ .



33) The answer is A). Let  $A = \{0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9\}$ . The number of choices for selection of two integers greater than 3 from  $A$  is  ${}^6C_2$  and The number of choices for selection of two integers smaller than 3 from  $A$  is  ${}^3C_2$ . The probability of the event is

$$\frac{({}^3C_2)({}^6C_2)}{{}^{10}C_5} = \frac{5}{28}$$

34) The answer is C). There are 8 distinct letters and the letters A, M, and T repeat twice. There are  ${}_8P_3$  permutations if we choose three distinct letters from 8 distinct letters and there are  ${}_3C_1$  choices of picking two same letters and  ${}_7C_1$  choices of picking one from other 7 letters, and each choice has three distinct permutations (Ex. MMT, TMM, MTM). So

$${}_8P_3 + (3)({}_3C_1)({}_7C_1) = 399.$$

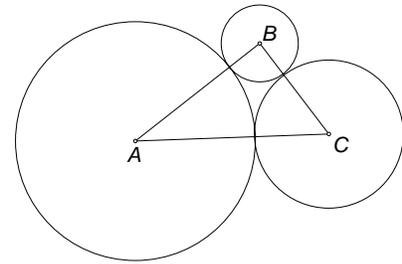
35) The answer is D) Since distances between the centers of two circles are 3, 4, and 5, which are Pythagorean numbers, the triangle  $\triangle ABC$  is a right triangle with

$\angle B = 90^\circ = \frac{\pi}{2}$ . The area of  $\triangle ABC$  is

$$\frac{1}{2}(AB)(AC) \sin \angle A = \frac{1}{2}(4)(5) \frac{3}{5} = 6. \text{ Note that}$$

$$\sin \angle A = \frac{3}{5}, \quad \sin \angle C = \frac{4}{5},$$

$\angle A = 0.6435$  radian and  $\angle C = 0.9273$  radian. Subtracting the areas of the three circular sectors from the area of the triangle  $ABC$ , we get roughly  $0.46 \text{ in}^2$  of the area of the white region between the circles.



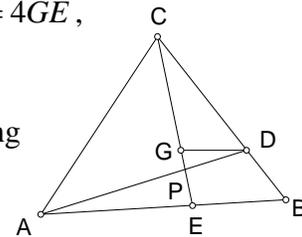
36) The answer is E).

Draw  $DG \parallel AB$ .  $\frac{CG}{GE} = \frac{CD}{DB} = \frac{4}{1}$ ,  $\frac{GD}{EB} = \frac{CD}{CB} = \frac{4}{5}$ . Therefore,  $CG = 4GE$ ,

$CG = \frac{4}{5}CE$ , and  $GD = \frac{4}{5}EB$ . Note that  $\frac{GD}{AE} = \frac{\frac{4}{5}EB}{AE} = \frac{GP}{PE}$ . Using

$\frac{EB}{AE} = \frac{3}{4}$ , we have  $\frac{4}{5} \frac{3}{4} = \frac{GP}{PE}$  and  $GP = \frac{3}{5}PE$ .

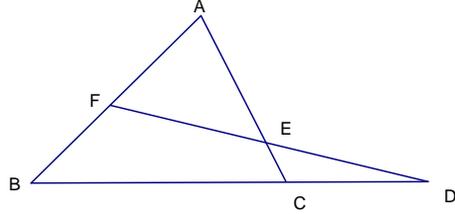
$CP = CG + GP = \frac{4}{5}CE + \frac{3}{5}PE = \frac{4}{5}(CP + PE) + \frac{3}{5}PE$ . Thus  $\frac{CP}{PE} = 7$ .



**Menelaus's theorem states:**

If a line meets the sides BC, CA, and AB of a triangle in the points D, E, and F then the products of the ratios

$$\frac{AE}{EC} \cdot \frac{CD}{DB} \cdot \frac{BF}{FA} = 1$$



By Menelaus's theorem,  $\frac{CP}{PE} \cdot \frac{EA}{AB} \cdot \frac{BD}{DC} = 1$ . Since  $\frac{CD}{DB} = \frac{4}{1}$  and  $\frac{AE}{EB} = \frac{4}{3}$ , we have  $\frac{BD}{DC} = \frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{EA}{AB} = \frac{4}{7}$ . Then  $\frac{CP}{PE} \cdot \frac{EA}{AB} \cdot \frac{BD}{DC} = \frac{CP}{PE} \cdot \frac{4}{7} \cdot \frac{1}{4} = 1$ . Therefore,  $\frac{CP}{PE} = 7$ .

37) The answer is C). If  $x + \frac{1}{x} = 2 \cos \frac{\pi}{k}$ , then the equation  $x^2 - 2 \cos \frac{\pi}{k} x + 1 = 0$

has solutions  $x = \cos \frac{\pi}{k} \pm \sin \frac{\pi}{k} i$ . So  $x = e^{\frac{i\pi}{k}}$  or  $e^{-\frac{i\pi}{k}}$ .

$$x^k + x^{-k} = (e^{\frac{i\pi}{k}})^k + (e^{\frac{i\pi}{k}})^{-k} = e^{i\pi} + e^{-i\pi} = 2 \cos \pi = -2.$$

38) The answer is B).  $(\sin x + \sin y)^2 = \sin^2 x + 2 \sin x \sin y + \sin^2 y = \frac{1}{2}$  and

$$(\cos x + \cos y)^2 = \cos^2 x + 2 \cos x \cos y + \cos^2 y = 2.$$

Thus

$$\sin^2 x + \cos^2 x + \sin^2 y + \cos^2 y + 2(\sin x \sin y + \cos x \cos y) = 2 + 2 \cos(x - y) = \frac{1}{2} + 2.$$

$$\text{Therefore, } \cos(x - y) = \frac{1}{4}.$$

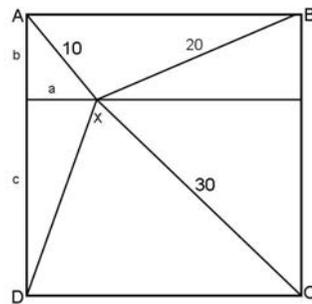
39) The answer is E). Draw a line passing through the point X and parallel to AB. Label a, b and c as shown in the figure.

Then  $a^2 + b^2 = 10^2$  and

$$30^2 - c^2 = 20^2 - b^2, \text{ which gives}$$

$$a^2 + c^2 + b^2 - 30^2 = 10^2 - 20^2 + b^2.$$

$XD^2 = a^2 + c^2 = 30^2 + 10^2 - 20^2 = 600$ . We have  $XD = 10\sqrt{6}$ .



40) The answer is C).  $2008 = \frac{(a+b)(b-a+1)}{2}$ . Since the prime factorization of 2008 is  $251 \times 2^3$ , we have  $251 \times 16 = (a+b)(b-a+1)$ , or  $502 \times 8 = (a+b)(b-a+1)$ , or  $1004 \times 2 = (a+b)(b-a+1)$ . Using the fact that  $a > 0$  and  $b$  is an integer, we see that only  $\begin{cases} a+b=251 \\ b-a+1=16 \end{cases}$  has a correct solution. So  $a+b=251$ .

41) The answer is A). The polynomial  $x^4 - x^3 - 2x^2 + 3x - 3$  can be factored as a product of two quadratic polynomials. Since the sum of two solutions of the equation  $x^4 - x^3 - 2x^2 + 3x - 3 = 0$  is 0, the coefficient of  $x$  in one of two quadratic polynomials must be zero. Thus  $x^4 - x^3 - 2x^2 + 3x - 3 = (x^2 + d)(x^2 + bx + c) = x^4 + bx^3 + (c+d)x^2 + bdx + cd$ . Then  $b = -1$ ,  $bd = -d = 3$ , and  $cd = -3c = -3$ . We have  $x^4 - x^3 - 2x^2 + 3x - 3 = (x^2 - 3)(x^2 - x + 1)$ , which gives other two solutions  $\frac{1 \pm i\sqrt{3}}{2}$ .

42) The answer is A). Consider the polynomial  $p(x) = (x+1)f(x) - 1$ . Since each of the numbers  $1, 2, \dots, 2008$  is a root of  $p(x)$  and the degree of  $p(x)$  is 2008,  $p(x) = (x+1)f(x) - 1 = a(x-1)(x-2)\cdots(x-2008)$  for some constant  $a$ . Substituting  $x = -1$  in the above equation, we obtain  $-1 = a(2009!)$  and so  $a = -\frac{1}{2009!}$ . Now we evaluate  $p(x)$  at  $-2$ . We get  $p(-2) = (-2+1)f(-2) - 1 = -\frac{1}{2009!}(-3)\cdot(-4)\cdots(-2010) = -1005$ . Thus,  $f(-2) = 1004$ .

43) The answer is A). 2008 has the prime factorization  $(251)(2^3)$ . Since  $aabb$  is the representation of 2008 in base  $c$ ,

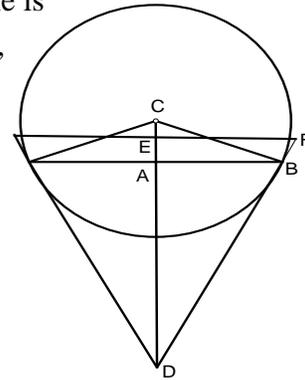
$$2008 = ac^3 + ac^2 + bc + b = ac^2(c+1) + b(c+1) = (ac^2 + b)(c+1).$$

So  $(ac^2 + b)(c+1) = (251)(2^3)$ . Note that  $ac^2 + b > c+1$  because  $c \geq 2$ ,  $a \geq 1$ , and  $b \geq 1$ .  $ac^2 + b$  must be the bigger factor of 2008. If  $ac^2 + b = 251$  and  $c+1 = 8$ , then  $c = 7$  and  $49a + b = 251$ . Using the fact that  $0 < a, b < c = 7$ , we see that  $a = 5$  and  $b = 6$  are the only solution of the equation  $49a + b = 251$ . Since  $5(7^3) + 5(7^2) + 6(7) + 6 = 2008$ ,  $a - 2b + c = 5 - 2(6) + 7 = 0$  is a solution. Other possible factors in  $(ac^2 + b)(c+1)$  are  $ac^2 + b = 502$  and  $c+1 = 4$  or  $ac^2 + b = 1004$  and  $c+1 = 2$ . But in both cases, there are no solutions for  $a, b$  and  $c$  because  $0 < a, b < c$  and  $c \leq 3$ .

44) The answer is B). If  $\sqrt{a+x} > x$ , then  $a + \sqrt{a+x} > a+x$ . So  $\sqrt{a + \sqrt{a+x}} > x$ . The equation  $\sqrt{a + \sqrt{a+x}} = x$  had no solutions. Similarly, if  $\sqrt{a+x} < x$ , The equation  $\sqrt{a + \sqrt{a+x}} = x$  also had no solutions. If  $\sqrt{a+x} = x$ , then the equation has a solution. Note that the quadratic equation  $x^2 - x - a = 0$  has one negative and one positive solution. The positive solution is the only solution to the equation  $\sqrt{a + \sqrt{a+x}} = x$ .

45) The answer is D). Note that  $n^2 + 2008 = n^2 - 2007^2 + 2007^2 + 2008$ . If  $n + 2007$  divides  $n^2 + 2008$ , then  $n + 2007$  must divide  $2007^2 + 2008$ . The greatest integer  $n$  with the property that  $n + 2007$  divides  $2007^2 + 2008$  must satisfy the equation  $n + 2007 = 2007^2 + 2008$ . Thus  $n = 2007^2 + 1 = 4028050$ . The sum of the digits of such an integer  $n$  is 19.

46) The answer is D). The cross section of the sphere and the cone is shown on the right. Using the fact that  $EF = 1$  and  $ED = \sqrt{3}$ , we have  $\angle BDA = 30^\circ$ . Since the line segment  $\overline{DF}$  is tangent to the circle,  $\angle BCD = 60^\circ$ . The radius of the sphere is 1. Thus the radius of the intersection of the sphere and the cone is  $AB = \sin 60^\circ = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}$ . Therefore, the diameter of the intersection is  $\sqrt{3}$ .



47) The answer is C). Using the fact that the series  $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} x^n$  converges

absolutely for  $0 < x < 1$ , we have

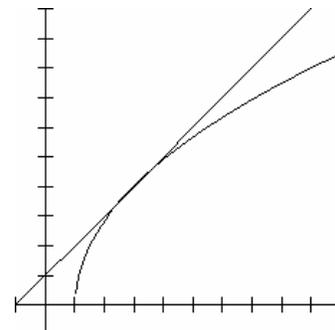
$$\begin{aligned} a + 2a^2 + 3a^3 + 4a^4 + \dots &= a(1 + 2a + 3a^2 + 4a^3 + \dots) \\ &= a \left( \frac{d}{dx} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} x^n \right) \Big|_{x=a} = a \left( \frac{d}{dx} \frac{x}{1-x} \right) \Big|_{x=a} = a \left( \frac{1}{(1-x)^2} \right) \Big|_{x=a} = \frac{a}{(1-a)^2} \end{aligned}$$

48) The answer is B). The slope of the tangent line  $y = x + 1$  is 1. Since the derivative  $y'(x)$  is the slope the tangent line at  $x$ ,  $y' = 1$  at the point where the tangent line and the parabola touch each other. Implicitly differentiating gives

$$1 = 2ayy'. \text{ Since } y' = 1, \text{ } y = \frac{1}{2a}. \text{ Noting}$$

$$\text{that } y - 1 = x = 1 + ay^2, \text{ we have } \frac{1}{2a} - 1 = 1 + a \left( \frac{1}{2a} \right)^2,$$

$$\text{which gives } a = \frac{1}{8}.$$



49) The answer is A). Let  $x$  the speed of the cars. Two hours after passing over the first car, the plane has traveled  $(2)(350)=700$  miles and the first car has also traveled  $2x$  miles. The distance between two cars at the moment is  $700 - 2x$  miles. The two cars met at the middle place of  $700 - 2x$  miles, which is  $2400$  miles from the plane.

The plane has traveled  $2400 - \frac{700 - 2x}{2}$  miles since it passed the second car. So we

have the equation  $\frac{700 - 2x}{2} = \frac{2400 - \frac{700 - 2x}{2}}{350}x$ , which is equivalent to

$$x^2 + 2400x - 350^2 = 0. \quad x = 50 \text{ mph}$$

50) The answer is D).

Let  $a_1 = 1 + 1$ ,  $a_2 = 1 + \frac{1}{1+1}$ ,  $a_3 = 1 + \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{1+1}}$ , ... The sequence  $\{a_n\}$  is defined by

$$a_{n+1} = 1 + \frac{1}{a_n} \text{ for } n \geq 1 \text{ and } a_1 = 2.$$

Note that the sequence  $\{a_n\}$  is convergent and the limit of the sequence is the nonterminating continued fraction. Let  $\lim a_n = a$ . Taking limit on both sides of

$$\text{the equation } a_{n+1} = 1 + \frac{1}{a_n},$$

we get the equation  $a^2 - a - 1 = 0$ . Since  $a_n > 0$ ,  $a = \frac{1 + \sqrt{5}}{2}$ .

Note: the convergence of the sequence can be justified by applying the Fixed-Point Theorem to the function  $g(x) = 1 + \frac{1}{x}$  on  $[1.5, 2]$ .