

Math Is Always True

By Sharon Coburn

This was a tough assignment for me. I am the ultimate skeptic, so I had to think long and hard to find something I absolutely knew to be true. And then it hit me like a ton of quadratic equations - Mathematics!

Math is real. Math is true. Math is infallible! Yes, it's a human construct, but it *perfectly* explains the laws of natural science. You can call π 'cake' if you wish, but if you use it to multiply the radius of a circle, it will *always* give you circumference!

I taught my very young children addition and subtraction using cookies.

"Here are three cookies."

"Yay!"

"I'm giving two to your sister."

"What?!"

Addition lessons were always more popular than subtraction!

I always loved the logic of math. It's absolute, binary: 0 or 1. There are no grey areas. It started out to be my major in college. For two years, I lived happily in my world of sines, cosines, and tangents. Then I asked myself what I wanted to be when I grew up. Oops! Too shy to be a teacher, not really interested in engineering. What to do?

I switched my major to Business – the irreverent, ever changing money major. I was a sellout! But the degree was valuable, and mathematics would always be there whenever I wanted to know what was real.