

1037-05-127

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*Facial coloring.*

A vertex coloring of a plane graph is  $l$ -facial if every two vertices joined by a facial walk of length at most  $l$  receive distinct colors. It has been conjectured that every plane graph has an  $l$ -facial coloring with at most  $3l + 1$  colors. We improve the currently best known bound and show that every plane graph has an  $l$ -facial coloring with at most  $\lfloor 7l/2 \rfloor + 6$  colors. (Received January 29, 2008)