BOOKSHELF

New and Noteworthy Titles on our Bookshelf
September 2022

Courtesy of Laura P. Schaposnik.

Ene and the Magic Tree: A Mathematical Adventure
Ene y el Árbol Mágico: Una Aventura Matemática
By Laura P. Schaposnik
Illustrated by Celia La Rosa

If you're looking for fun and engaging ways to introduce the youngsters in your life to mathematics in a Spanish and English setting, Ene can help! Ene is a mouse who lives by a magical tree. There are several books that follow Ene on grand adventures while teaching about history and artisans, all of which are told in both English and Spanish. This story follows Ene's day-long adventure visiting his friends the ants and the birds and eventually gaining a new best friend, Dino, who is hatched under a full moon.

Ene's day is already exciting but to add to the fun, there are hidden math symbols on each page. Anyone who has read a book to a child has experienced the joy of stopping to investigate the illustrations that accompany the story. The added task of picking out the math hidden on the page can help to get children excited about and more comfortable with math from a young age. At the end of the book there is a key that details and defines the math symbols, such as a Venn Diagram, the unknot, and a Klein bottle. The author is a mathematician who invites us to join in Ene's adventure and expose children to math along the way! Can the children in your life help Ene find all of the hidden math?

Shape: The Hidden Geometry of Information, Biology, Strategy, Democracy, and Everything Else
By Jordan Ellenberg

You may recognize Ellenberg's name from his 2014 acclaimed book *How Not to Be Wrong*. In his latest book, *Shape*, Ellenberg has once again succeeded in writing a funny, witty, and informative book for the general public looking for a light and enjoyable book about math.

The focus of *Shape* is on geometry and the crucial role it plays in our lives and the world. Ellenberg momentarily transports us back to our high school geometry class where most of us had the experience of mechanically moving from one axiom to the next to prove that two triangles are the same. Pointing this method out as a disservice to a fascinating and relevant subject, Ellenberg discusses exciting and engaging geometry topics that challenge the reader to think more creatively. He expertly weaves together a narrative with names like Abe Lincoln (who studied Euclid's *Elements* and firmly believed that everyone can and should learn geometry), Emmy Noether, and Poincaré and illustrates how geometric ideas are present even on Twitter and Snapchat.

During this foray through geometry, Ellenberg explores topics such as topology, the Euler characteristic, symmetries, mathematical trees, and different definitions of distance. He also demonstrates the power of working with a toy example to develop intuition and uses this to help the reader understand the spirit of how geometry can be used in various complex arguments. I encourage you to pick up *Shape* for yourself and share it, and the enjoyment of mathematics it brings, with your non-mathematician friends!

The Bookshelf is prepared monthly by Notices *Associate Editor Katelynn Kochalski.*

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