

MTH 113 Journal Suggestions

You will be required to keep a journal to track mathematics you encountered and reflect on your mathematical experience. You will need a 3-ring binder or notebook in which you will be collecting entries (short narratives, newspaper clippings, photographs, etc.) related to your everyday use of mathematics.

In many cases our use of mathematics is subconscious and sometimes difficult to trace. Therefore try to make it a habit to reflect on quantitative or mathematical situations on a regular basis - every day or two.

Although there is no uniform template for the journal, it is suggested to keep it as a diary. These diary entries can be very brief such as

02/11 – checking change in the grocery store; estimating time of my arrival to Midland (by car)
02/12 – figuring out a better deal on AA rechargeable batteries on eBay – the same brand, one priced less but w/ shipping charges, another more pricey w/ free shipping
02/13 – estimating mileage before running out of gas
etc...

These short “daily” entries do not have to be submitted and their purpose is to increase your sensitivity to mathematical situations around you. After collecting several of such “raw” entries, you will choose 10 entries (5 for each journal assessment) and provide a more detailed description and discussion – what strategies you used or tried to use to solve the problem, what kind of mathematics helped you and how (diagrams, equations, ratios, ...) etc.

There is a considerable variety of mathematical and you can encounter them in a store, as you talk to your friends or family or read a newspaper or book, when you cook, drive a car or work on a household or garden project or even maybe when you buy a lottery ticket... Try to make your journal entries varied to get a broad sample of math-related life situations pertinent to your life.

The instructor will collect and evaluate your quantitative journals with elaborated entries 2x in the semester. Each evaluation is worth up to 5 points. It is expected that you will have at least 5 authentic entries with detailed discussion each time you submit your quantitative journal.

Other remarks:

- Authentic problems that you were not able to solve have a special value – please highlight these items for a quick reference.
- If you include copies of bills or receipts, protect sensitive information.
- Entries related to college courses with mathematical background should be excluded from the journal.
- If your entries contain mathematical symbols, sketches or diagrams, they do not have to be typed as long as they are legible and can be understood by someone else.