

***Plus* new writers award — bring maths to life**

Guidelines for secondary school and sixth form entrants

Your article

You are invited to submit an article on the life and/or work of a mathematician of your choice, living or dead. The world of maths is riddled with fascinating stories of human triumph, tragedy and intrigue. Isaac Newton and Gottfried Leibniz quibbled over who invented the calculus, Evariste Galois died in a duel at the tender age of 21, the Bernoullis were a mathematical family full of intrigue, and women like Sophie Germain had to pretend to be men to have their work taken seriously. In modern times, Grigori Perelman reluctantly entered the media spotlight in 2006 by refusing the Fields Medal, the highest honour in mathematics.

But you don't have to write about a well-known giant of maths. Long forgotten figures you think deserve recognition, or people you know doing maths-related work you think the world should know about — all are equally welcome! And if it's a particular mathematical idea that has captured your imagination, go and find out who was involved in its invention — you'll be surprised at the stories behind the most innocent looking bits of maths!

Your piece should be no more than 900 words long. It is up to you whether you focus on the maths or the personal story, or both, but there should be some indication of the maths involved. See [researching your article](#) for some helpful resources.

Don't forget that interviewing is also a possibility! If you know someone you think has something interesting to say, go and speak to them!

Researching your article

Plus magazine has a [number of articles](#) on individual mathematicians. Have a browse and get inspired. Also go and browse the *Plus* [archive](#), as there are references to mathematical protagonists and their work in most *Plus* articles. Reading *Plus* articles is also useful to get a feel for the kind of articles we're after.

The [MacTutor history of mathematics website](#) has a great archive of mathematicians' biographies and lots more information on the history of maths. It also has an index of [female mathematicians](#).

Other useful websites are: [Biographies of women mathematicians](#) and [Mathematicians of the 17th and 19th century](#). Once you've pinned down a few people you're interested in, an Internet search is likely to come up with lots of informative links.

The Internet will probably be your most prominent source, though books and articles are equally fine. Keep track of your sources and provide details in a bibliography, to be submitted with your entry. Include: title, author and publisher for books; author, title of article, title of publication and volume/date for magazine and newspaper articles; and a URL for a webpage. If you're interviewing someone, give their name and the date and location of the interview.

Take special care with information from the internet. The above mentioned websites are all good sources, but random sites you stumble upon can be incorrect. If in doubt, check several sources. You can get some tips on using the internet for research from [UC Berkeley](#).

Writing your article

Your article should be no more than 900 words long. It doesn't have to be that long, anything shorter is equally welcome. It's fine to use mathematical formulae or technical expressions, as long as you make clear what they mean. Write your article in a lively and engaging style — it's for fun, not hard work!

If you decide to write about someone who has already been covered in *Plus*, try to take a fresh angle or write about something that didn't come up in the *Plus* articles.

Pictures and diagrams are welcome. If they are not your own, then make sure you get permission from the copyright holder. If the image is from the Internet, you can usually obtain permission by emailing the contact person, if it's from a print publication, write to the publisher.

Spelling and grammar are really important — make sure that everything's correct!

When you're done, get someone else to read your piece and give you some feedback.

Submitting your entry

- Complete the entry form - either as a word document (download [word document](#)) or print the PDF and write clearly (download [PDF](#)).
- Complete and sign the copyright form, and if you are under 18 have a parent or legal guardian cosign the form. If you are submitting your entry electronically, include a scanned version of the copyright form with your entry.
- Only include your name on the entry form and copyright form, do not include your name anywhere in the article. We will randomly allocate a number to each entry when it is received, to identify it. This is to ensure the judging is anonymous. Names will be linked back to entries after the judging has been completed.
- Post your entry to:

Plus new writers award 2006
Millennium Mathematics Project
Centre for Mathematical Sciences

Wilberforce Road
Cambridge CB3 0WA, UK

or email it to pluswriters@maths.cam.ac.uk with "*Plus* new writers award 2006" as the subject header.

Check you have included the completed entry form, copyright form, your article and bibliography. If you are emailing your entry, you need to send in a scanned version of the entry form (if you wrote on the PDF printout) and copyright form, and your article must consist of a single file (either a word document or PDF file) including any images, illustrations or diagrams.

- Closing date is March 31st, 2008.
- Happy writing!

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined in the [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#) as stealing and passing off the ideas or words of another as your own, without crediting the source. It's a serious offence! Don't copy any text, whether from the internet or a printed source, without clearly marking it as a quotation and stating where it is from. If you are paraphrasing the work from another source, without significantly changing the content, you must also credit the source. Plagiarised entries will be disqualified. As part of the entry form, you will be asked to sign (and have your parents cosign if you are under 18) a copyright form, which states that the work you are submitting is original and your own work.